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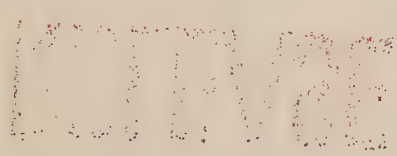
The Seasons.

ÆTATIS XXV
J. Gilbert.
S. Hollyer

THE SKATER

by James Evans



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ST. JOSEPH'S UNIVERSITY STX
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SEASONS.

PR3732
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BY

JAMES THOMSON.

WITH

A Life of the Author,

BY PATRICK MURDOCH, D.D., F.R.S.

03807

ELEGANTLY ILLUSTRATED BY SCHMOLZE.

PHILADELPHIA:
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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
MEMOIR	9
SPRING	41
SUMMER	97
AUTUMN	183
WINTER	249
A HYMN	301
NOTES	309

ILLUSTRATIONS

FROM ORIGINAL DESIGNS EXECUTED EXPRESSLY FOR THIS EDITION.

PORTRAIT OF THOMSON . . . . . Frontispiece

A WINTER SCENE . . . . . Designed by SCHMOLZE . Title Page

SPRING . . . . . SCHMOLZE . . . 43

SHOULD I MY STEPS TURN TO THE RURAL SEAT . . . SCHMOLZE . . . 78

THEN NATURE ALL WEARS TO THE LOVER'S EYE A LOOK OF LOVE SCHMOLZE . . . 85

SUMMER . . . . . SCHMOLZE . . . 99

WHILE NATURE LIES AROUND DEEP-LULL'D IN NOON . . SCHMOLZE . . . 127

AUTUMN . . . . . SCHMOLZE . . . 185

IN STILL RETREATS AND FLOWERY SOLITUDES . . . . SCHMOLZE . . . 244

WINTER . . . . . SCHMOLZE . . . 251

BATAVIA RUSHES FORTH; AND AS THEY SWEEP, ON SOUNDING SKATES . . . . . SCHMOLZE . . . 286

A MEMOIR

OF

JAMES THOMSON,

BY PATRICK MURDOCH, D.D. F.R.S.[1]

It is commonly said that the life of a good writer is best read in his works; which can scarce fail to receive a peculiar tincture from his temper, manners, and habits: the distinguishing character of his mind, his ruling passion, at least, will there appear undisguised.[2] But however just this observation may be, and although we might safely rest Mr. Thomson's fame as a good man as well as a man of genius on this sole footing, yet the desire which the public always shows of being more particularly acquainted with the history of an eminent author ought not to be

disappointed; as it proceeds not from mere curiosity, but chiefly from affection and gratitude to those by whom they have been entertained and instructed.

To give some account of a deceased friend is often a piece of justice likewise, which ought not to be refused to his memory; to prevent or efface the impertinent fictions which officious biographers are so apt to collect and propagate. And we may add that the circumstances of an author's life will sometimes throw the best light upon his writings; instances whereof we shall meet with in the following pages.

Mr. Thomson was born at Ednam,[3] in the shire of Roxburgh, on the 11th of September in the year 1700.[4] His father, minister of that place,[5] was but little known beyond the narrow circle of his co-presbyters, and to a few gentlemen in the neighbourhood; but highly respected by them for his piety and his diligence in the pastoral duty, as appeared afterwards in their kind offices to his widow and orphan family.

The Reverend Messrs. Riccaltoun[6] and Gusthart, particularly, took a most affectionate and friendly part in all their concerns. The former, a man of uncommon penetra-

tion and good taste, had very early discovered, through the rudeness of young Thomson's puerile essays, a fund of genius well deserving culture and encouragement. He undertook, therefore, with the father's approbation, the chief direction of his studies, furnished him with the proper books, corrected his performances; and was daily rewarded with the pleasure of seeing his labour so happily employed.

The other reverend gentleman, Mr. Gusthart,[7] one of the ministers of Edinburgh, and senior of the chapel-royal, was no less serviceable to Mrs. Thomson in the management of her little affairs; which, after the decease of her husband, burdened as she was with a family of nine children, required the prudent counsels and assistance of that faithful and generous friend.

Sir William Bennet[8] likewise, well known for his gay humour and ready poetical wit, was highly delighted with our young poet, and used to invite him to pass the summer vacation at his country seat; a scene of life which Mr. Thomson always remembered with particular pleasure. But what he wrote during that time, either to entertain Sir William and Mr. Riccaltoun, or for his own amuse-

ment, he destroyed every new year's day ;[9] committing his little pieces to the flames in their due order, and crowning the solemnity with a copy of verses in which were humourously recited the several grounds of their condemnation.

After the usual course of school education, under an able master at Jedburgh,[10] Mr. Thomson was sent to the University of Edinburgh.[11] But in the second year of his admission, his studies were for some time interrupted by the death of his father ;[12] who was carried off so suddenly that it was not possible for Mr. Thomson, with all the diligence he could use, to receive his last blessing. This affected him to an uncommon degree ; and his relations still remember some extraordinary instances of his grief and filial duty on that occasion.

Mrs. Thomson, whose maiden name was Trotter,[13] and who was co-heiress of a small estate in the country,[14] did not sink under this misfortune. She consulted her friend Mr. Gusthart ; and having, by his advice, mortgaged her moiety of the farm, repaired with her family to Edinburgh —where she lived in a decent, frugal manner, till her favourite son had not only finished his academical course, but was even distinguished and patronized as a man of

genius. She was, herself, a person of uncommon natural endowments; possessed of every social and domestic virtue; with an imagination, for vivacity and warmth, scarce inferior to her son's, and which raised her devotional exercises to a pitch bordering on enthusiasm.[15]

But whatever advantage Mr. Thomson might derive from the complexion of his parent, it is certain he owed much to a religious education; and that his early acquaintance with the sacred writings contributed greatly to that sublime by which his works will be for ever distinguished. In his first pieces, the *Seasons*, we see him at once assume the majestic freedom of an Eastern writer; seizing the grand images as they rise, clothing them in his own expressive language, and preserving, throughout, the grace, the variety, and the dignity which belong to a just composition, unhurt by the stiffness of formal method.

About this time the study of poetry was become general in Scotland, the best English authors being universally read, and imitations of them attempted. Addison[16] had lately displayed the beauties of Milton's immortal work; and his remarks on it, together with Mr. Pope's celebrated

Essay,[17] had opened the way to an acquaintance with the best poets and critics.

But the most learned critic is not always the best judge of poetry; taste being a gift of nature, the want of which Aristotle and Bossu[18] cannot supply, nor even the study of the best originals, when the reader's faculties are not *tuned in a certain consonance* to those of the poet—and this happened to be the case with certain learned gentlemen into whose hands a few of Mr. Thomson's first essays had fallen. Some inaccuracies of style, and those luxuriances which a young writer can hardly avoid, lay open to their cavils and censure; so far indeed they might be competent judges—but the fire and enthusiasm of the poet had entirely escaped their notice. Mr. Thomson, however, conscious of his own strength, was not discouraged by this treatment; especially as he had some friends on whose judgment he could better rely, and who thought very differently of his performances. Only, from that time, he began to turn his views towards London, where works of genius may always expect a candid reception and due encouragement; and an accident soon after entirely determined him to try his fortune there.

The divinity chair at Edinburgh was then filled by the reverend and learned Mr. Hamilton,[19] a gentleman universally respected and beloved; and who had particularly endeared himself to the young divines under his care, by his kind offices, his candour and affability. Our author had attended his lectures for about a year, when there was prescribed to him, for the subject of an exercise, a psalm in which the power and majesty of God are celebrated. Of this psalm he gave a paraphrase and illustration, as the nature of the exercise required; but in a style so highly poetical as surprised the whole audience.[20] Mr. Hamilton, as his custom was, complimented the orator upon his performance, and pointed out to the students the most masterly striking parts of it; but at last, turning to Mr. Thomson, he told him, smiling, that if he thought of being useful in the ministry, he must keep a stricter rein upon his imagination, and express himself in language more intelligible to an ordinary congregation.

This gave Mr. Thomson to understand that his expectations from the study of theology might be very precarious; even though the *church* had been more his free choice than probably it was. So that having, soon after, received some

encouragement from a lady of quality,[21] a friend of his mother's, then in London, he quickly prepared himself for his journey. And although this encouragement ended in nothing beneficial, it served for the present as a good pretext to cover the imprudence of committing himself to the wide world, unfriended and unpatronized, and with the slender stock of money he was then possessed of.

But his merit did not long lie concealed. Mr. Forbes,[22] afterwards lord-president of the session, then attending the service of parliament, having seen a specimen of Mr. Thomson's poetry in Scotland, received him very kindly, and recommended him to some of his friends;[23] particularly to Mr. Aikman,[24] who lived in great intimacy with many persons of distinguished rank and worth. This gentleman, from a connoisseur in painting, was become a professed painter; and his taste being no less just and delicate in the kindred art of descriptive poetry, than in his own, no wonder that he soon conceived a friendship for our author. What a warm return he met with, and how Mr. Thomson was affected by his friend's premature death, appears in the copy of verses which he wrote on that occasion.[25]

In the mean time, our author's reception, wherever he

was introduced, emboldened him to risk the publication of his *Winter;* in which, as himself was a mere novice in such matters, he was kindly assisted by Mr. Mallet,[26] then private tutor to his grace the Duke of Montrose,[27] and his brother the Lord George Graham,[28] so well known afterwards as an able and gallant sea-officer. To Mr. Mallet he likewise owed his first acquaintance with several of the wits of that time; an exact information of their characters, personal and poetical, and how they stood affected to each other.[29]

The poem of *Winter*,[30] published in March, 1726, was no sooner read than universally admired;[31] those only excepted who had not been used to feel, or to look for, anything in poetry beyond a point of satirical or epigrammatic wit, a smart antithesis richly trimmed with rhyme,[32] or the softness of an elegiac complaint. To such his manly classical spirit could not readily recommend itself; till, after a more attentive perusal, they had got the better of their prejudices, and either acquired or affected a truer taste. A few others stood aloof, merely because they had long before fixed the articles of their poetical creed, and resigned themselves to an absolute despair of ever seeing

anything new and original. These were somewhat mortified to find their notions disturbed by the appearance of a poet who seemed to owe nothing but to nature and his own genius. But, in a short time, the applause became unanimous; every one wondering how so many pictures, and pictures so familiar, should have moved them but faintly to what they felt in his descriptions. His digressions too, the overflowings of a tender benevolent heart, charmed the reader no less; leaving him in doubt whether he should more admire the poet or love the man.

From that time, Mr. Thomson's acquaintance was courted by all men of taste; and several ladies of high rank and distinction became his declared patronesses—the Countess of Hertford,[33] Miss Drelincourt,[34] afterwards Viscountess Primrose, Mrs. Stanley,[35] and others. But the chief happiness which his *Winter* procured him was that it brought him acquainted with Dr. Rundle,[36] afterwards lord bishop of Derry; who upon conversing with Mr. Thomson, and finding in him qualities greater still and of more value than those of a poet, received him into his intimate confidence and friendship—promoted his character everywhere—introduced him to his great friend the

Lord-Chancellor Talbot[37]—and, some years after, when the eldest son of that nobleman was to make his *tour* of travelling, recommended Mr. Thomson as a proper companion for him. His affection and gratitude to Dr. Rundle, and his indignation at the treatment that worthy prelate had met with, are finely expressed in his poem to the memory of Lord Talbot. The true cause of that undeserved treatment has been secreted from the public, as well as the dark manœuvres that were employed; but Mr. Thomson, who had access to the best information, places it to the account of—

> slanderous zeal, and politics infirm,
> Jealous of worth.

Meanwhile our poet's chief care had been, in return for the public favour, to finish the plan which their wishes laid out for him; and the expectations which his *Winter* had raised were fully satisfied by the successive publication of the other *Seasons:* of *Summer*, in the year 1727;[38] of *Spring*,[39] in the beginning of the following year; and of *Autumn*, in a quarto edition of his works, printed in 1730.[40]

In that edition, the *Seasons* are placed in their natural

order; and crowned with that inimitable *Hymn* in which we view them in their beautiful succession, as one whole, the immediate effect of infinite power and goodness. In imitation of the Hebrew bard, all nature is called forth to do homage to the Creator, and the reader is left enraptured in silent adoration and praise.

Besides these, and his tragedy of *Sophonisba*,[41] written and acted with applause in the year 1729, Mr. Thomson had, in 1727, published his poem to the memory of Sir Isaac Newton,[42] then lately deceased; containing a deserved encomium of that incomparable man, with an account of his chief discoveries—sublimely poetical, and yet so just, that an ingenious foreigner, the Count Algarotti, takes a line of it for the text of his philosophical dialogues, *Il Newtonianismo per le dame*. This was in part owing to the assistance he had of his friend Mr. Gray,[43] now [1768] of the Marischal College, Aberdeen, a gentleman well versed in the Newtonian philosophy, who, on that occasion, gave him a very exact though general abstract of his principles.

That same year, the resentment of our merchants for the interruption of their trade by the Spaniards in

America running very high, Mr. Thomson zealously took part in it; and wrote his poem *Britannia*,[44] to rouse the nation to revenge. And although this piece is the less read that its subject was but accidental and temporary, the spirited generous sentiments that enrich it, can never be out of season; they will at least remain a monument of that love of his country, that *devotion to the public*, which he is ever inculcating as the perfection of virtue, and which none ever felt more pure, or more intense, than himself.

Our author's poetical studies were now to be interrupted, or rather improved, by his attendance on the honourable Mr. Charles Talbot in his travels.[45] A delightful task indeed! endowed as that young nobleman was by nature, and accomplished by the care and example of the best of fathers, in whatever could adorn humanity; graceful of person, elegant in manners and address, pious, humane, generous—with an exquisite taste in all the finer arts.

With this amiable companion and friend, Mr. Thomson visited most of the courts and capital cities of Europe;[46] and returned with his views greatly enlarged—not of

exterior nature only, and the works of art, but of human life and manners, of the constitution and policy of the several states, their connexions, and their religious institutions. How particular and judicious his observations were, we see in his poem of *Liberty*, begun soon after his return to England. We see at the same time to what a high pitch his love of his country was raised by the comparisons he had all along been making of our happy well-poised government with those of other nations. To inspire his fellow-subjects with the like sentiments, and to show them by what means the precious freedom we enjoy may be preserved, and how it may be abused or lost, he employed two years of his life in composing that noble work; upon which, conscious of the importance and dignity of the subject, he valued himself more than upon all his other writings.[47]

While Mr. Thomson was writing the first part of *Liberty*, he received a severe shock by the death of his noble friend and fellow-traveller; which was soon followed by another that was severer still, and of more general concern, the death of Lord Talbot himself[48]—which Mr. Thomson so pathetically and so justly laments in the poem

dedicated to his memory.[49] In him the nation saw itself deprived of an uncorrupted patriot, the faithful guardian of their rights, on whose wisdom and integrity they had founded their hopes of relief from many tedious vexations;[50] and Mr. Thomson, besides his share in the general mourning, had to bear all the affliction which a heart like his could feel, for the person whom, of all mankind, he most revered and loved. At the same time, he found himself, from an easy competency, reduced to a state of precarious dependence, in which he passed the remainder of his life; excepting only the two last years of it, during which he enjoyed the place of surveyor-general of the Leeward Islands, procured for him by the generous friendship of my Lord Lyttelton.[51]

Immediately upon his return to England with Mr. Talbot, the chancellor had made him his secretary of briefs;[52] a place of little attendance, suiting his retired indolent way of life, and equal to all his wants. This place fell with his patron; and although the noble lord who succeeded to Lord Talbot in office[53] kept it vacant for some time, probably till Mr. Thomson should apply for it, he was so dispirited, and so listless to every concern of

that kind, that he never took one step in the affair—a neglect which his best friends greatly blamed in him.

Yet could not his genius be depressed, or his temper hurt, by this reverse.[54] He resumed, with time, his usual cheerfulness, and never abated one article in his way of living; which, though simple, was genial and elegant. The profits arising from his works were not inconsiderable: his tragedy of *Agamemnon*,[55] acted in 1738, yielded a good sum; Mr. Miller[56] was always at hand, to answer, or even to prevent his demands; and he had a friend or two besides, whose hearts, he knew, were not contracted by the ample fortunes they had acquired—who would of themselves interpose, if they saw any occasion for it.

But his chief dependence, during this long interval, was on the protection and bounty of his Royal Highness Frederic[57] Prince of Wales; who upon the recommendation of Lord Lyttelton,[58] then his chief favourite, settled on him a handsome allowance. And afterwards, when he was introduced to his Royal Highness, that excellent prince, who truly was what Mr. Thomson paints him, *the friend of mankind and of merit*, received him very graciously, and ever after honoured him with many marks of particu-

lar favour and confidence.[59] A circumstance which does equal honour to the patron and the poet ought not here to be omitted; that my Lord Lyttelton's recommendation came altogether unsolicited, and long before Mr. Thomson was personally known to him.[60]

It happened, however, that the favour of his Royal Highness was in one instance of some prejudice to our author; in the refusal of a license for his tragedy of *Edward and Eleonora*,[61] which he had prepared for the stage in the year 1739. The reader may see that this play contains not a line which could justly give offence; but the ministry, still sore from certain pasquinades, which had lately produced the stage-act,[62] and as little satisfied with some parts of the prince's political conduct, as he was with their management of the public affairs, would not risk the representation of a piece written under his eye, and, they might probably think, by his command.

This refusal drew after it another; and in a way which, as it is related, was rather ludicrous.[63] Mr. Paterson, a companion of Mr. Thomson, afterwards his deputy and then his successor in the general-surveyorship, used to write out fair copies for his friend, when such were wanted

for the press or for the stage. This gentleman likewise courted the tragic muse; and had taken for his subject, the story of Arminius the German hero. But his play, guiltless as it was, being presented for a license, no sooner had the censor cast his eyes on the handwriting in which he had seen *Edward and Eleonora*, than he cried out, "Away with it!" and the author's profits were reduced to what his bookseller could afford for a tragedy in distress.

Mr. Thomson's next dramatic performance was the masque of *Alfred*;[64] written, jointly with Mr. Mallet, by command of the Prince of Wales, for the entertainment of his Royal Highness's court, at his summer-residence. This piece, with some alterations, and the music new, has been since brought upon the stage by Mr. Mallet: but the edition we give is from the original,[65] as it was acted at Cliefden, in the year 1740, on the birthday of her Royal Highness the Princess Augusta.[66]

In the year 1745, his *Tancred and Sigismunda*, taken from the novel in *Gil Blas*, was performed with applause; and from the deep romantic distress of the lovers, continues to draw crowded houses.[67] The success of this piece was indeed insured from the first by Mr. Garrick and

Mrs. Cibber their appearing in the principal characters; which they heightened and adorned with all the magic of their never failing art.

He had, in the mean time, been finishing his *Castle of Indolence*,[68] in two cantos. It was, at first, little more than a few detached stanzas, in the way of raillery on himself, and on some of his friends, who would reproach him with indolence; while he thought them, at least, as indolent as himself. But he saw very soon, that the subject deserved to be treated more seriously, and in a form fitted to convey one of the most important moral lessons.

The stanza which he uses in this work is that of Spenser, borrowed from the Italian poets, in which he thought rhymes had their proper place, and were even graceful; the compass of the stanza admitting an agreeable variety of final sounds, while the sense of the poet is not cramped or cut short, nor yet too much dilated, as must often happen when it is parcelled out into rhymed couplets—the usual measure indeed of our elegy and satire, but which always weakens the higher poetry, and to a true ear will sometimes give it an air of the burlesque.[69]

This was the last piece Mr. Thomson himself published; his tragedy of *Coriolanus* being only prepared for the theatre, when a fatal accident robbed the world of one of the best men, and best poets, that lived in it.

He had always been a timorous horseman, and more so in a road where numbers of giddy or unskilful riders are continually passing; so that when the weather did not invite him to go by water, he would commonly walk the distance between London and Richmond,[70] with any acquaintance that offered, with whom he might chat and rest himself, or perhaps dinè, by the way. One summer evening, being alone, in his walk from town to Hammersmith, he had overheated himself, and in that condition, imprudently took a boat to carry him to Kew; apprehending no bad consequence from the chill air on the river, which his walk to his house, at the upper end of Kew-lane, had always hitherto prevented. But, now, the cold had so seized him, that next day he found himself in a high fever, so much the more to be dreaded that he was of a full habit. This, however, by the use of proper medicines, was removed, so that he was thought to be out of danger; till the fine weather having tempted him to

expose himself once more to the evening dews, his fever returned with violence, and with such symptoms as left no hopes of a cure. Two days had passed before his relapse was known in town; at last, Mr. Mitchell[71] and Mr. Reid,[72] with Dr. Armstrong,[73] being informed of it, posted out at midnight to his assistance—but, alas! came only to endure a sight of all others the most shocking to nature, the last agonies of their beloved friend. This lamented death happened on the 27th day of August, 1748.[74]

His testamentary executors[75] were the Lord Lyttelton, whose care of our poet's fortune and fame ceased not with his life, and Mr. Mitchell, a gentleman equally noted for the truth and constancy of his private friendships, and for his address and spirit as a public minister. By their united interest, the orphan play of *Coriolanus*[76] was brought on the stage to the best advantage; from the profits of which, and the sale of manuscripts, and other effects, all demands were duly satisfied, and a handsome sum remitted to his sisters. My Lord Lyttelton's prologue to this piece was admired as one of the best that had ever been written:[77] the best spoken it certainly was. The sympathizing audience saw that *then*, indeed, Mr.

Quin was *no actor;* that the tears he shed, were those of real friendship and grief.[78]

Mr. Thomson's remains were deposited in the church of Richmond, under a plain stone, without any inscription;[79] nor did his brother-poets at all exert themselves on the occasion, as they had lately done for one who had been the terror of poets all his lifetime.[80] This, silence furnished matter to one of his friends for an excellent satirical epigram, which we are sorry we cannot give the reader. Only one gentleman, Mr. Collins, who had lived some time at Richmond, but forsook it when Mr. Thomson died, wrote an *Ode* to his memory. This, for the dirge-like melancholy it breathes, and the warmth of affection that seems to have dictated it, we shall subjoin to the present account.[81]

Our author himself hints, somewhere in his works, that his exterior was not the most promising—his make being rather robust than graceful;[82] though it is known that in his youth he had been thought handsome.[83] His worst appearance was, when you saw him walking alone, in a thoughtful mood; but let a friend accost him, and enter into conversation, he would instantly brighten into a most

amiable aspect, his features no longer the same, and his eye darting a peculiar animated fire. The case was much alike in company; where, if it was mixed, or very numerous, he made but an indifferent figure—but with a few select friends, he was open, sprightly, and entertaining. His wit flowed freely, but pertinently, and at due intervals, leaving room for every one to contribute his share. Such was his extreme sensibility, so perfect the harmony of his organs with the sentiments of his mind, that his looks always announced and half-expressed what he was about to say; and his voice corresponded exactly to the manner and degree in which he was affected. This sensibility had one inconvenience attending it, that it rendered him the very worst reader of good poetry: a sonnet, or a copy of tame verses, he could manage pretty well, or even improve them in the reading; but a passage of Virgil, Milton, or Shakspere, would sometimes quite oppress him [so] that you could hear little else than some ill-articulated sounds, rising as from the bottom of his breast.[84]

He had improved his taste upon the best originals, ancient and modern, but could not bear to write what was not strictly his own—what had not more immediately

struck his imagination, or touched his heart; so that he is not in the least concerned in that question about the *merit* or *demerit of imitators*. What he borrows from the ancients,[85] he gives us in an avowed faithful paraphrase or translation; as we see in a few passages taken from Virgil, and in that beautiful picture from Pliny the elder, where the course and gradual increase of the Nile are figured by the stages of man's life.

The autumn was his favourite season for poetical composition,[86] and the deep silence of the night the time he commonly chose for such studies; so that he would often be heard walking in his library till near morning, humming over, in his way, what he was to correct and write out next day.[87]

The amusements of his leisure hours were civil and natural history, voyages, and the relations of travellers, the most authentic he could procure; and, had his situation favoured it, he would certainly have excelled in gardening, agriculture, and every rural improvement and exercise. Although he performed on no instrument, he was passionately fond of music, and would sometimes listen a full hour at his window to the nightingales in

Richmond Gardens. While abroad, he had been greatly delighted with the regular Italian drama, such as Metastasio writes, as it is there heightened by the charms of the best voices and instruments; and looked upon our theatrical entertainments as, in one respect, naked and imperfect, when compared with the ancient, or with those of Italy—wishing sometimes that a chorus, at least, and a better recitative, could be introduced.

Nor was his taste less exquisite in the arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture. In his travels he had seen all the most celebrated monuments of antiquity, and the best productions of modern art; and studied them so minutely, and with so true a judgment, that in some of his descriptions, in the poem of *Liberty*, we have the master-pieces there mentioned placed in a stronger light perhaps than if we saw them with our eyes—at least more justly delineated than in any other account extant: so superior is a natural taste of the grand and beautiful, to the traditional lessons of a common virtuoso. His collection of prints, and some drawings from the antique, are now in the possession of his friend Mr. Gray of Richmond Hill.[88]

As for his more distinguishing qualities of mind and

heart, they are better represented in his writings than they can be by the pen of any biographer.[89] There, his love of mankind, of his country and friends, his devotion to the Supreme Being, founded on the most elevated and just conceptions of his operations and providence, shine out in every page. So unbounded was his tenderness of heart, that it took in even the brute creation: judge what it must have been towards his own species. He is not indeed known, through his whole life, to have given any person one moment's pain, by his writings or otherwise. He took no part in the poetical squabbles which happened in his time; and was respected and left undisturbed by both sides.[90] He would even refuse to take offence when he justly might; by interrupting any personal story that was brought him, with some jest, or some humorous apology for the offender. Nor was he ever seen ruffled or discomposed but when he read or heard of some flagrant instance of injustice, oppression, or cruelty; then, indeed, the strongest marks of horror and indignation were visible in his countenance.

These amiable virtues, this divine temper of mind, did not fail of their due reward. His friends loved him with

an enthusiastic ardour, and lamented his untimely fate in the manner that is still fresh in every one's memory;[91] the best and greatest men of his time honoured him with their friendship and protection;[92] the applause of the public attended every appearance he made—the actors, of whom the more eminent were his friends and admirers, grudging no pains to do justice to his tragedies.[93] At present, indeed, if we accept *Tancred*, they are seldom called for; the simplicity of his plots, and the models he worked after, not suiting the reigning taste, nor the impatience of an English theatre.[94] They may hereafter come to be in vogue; but we hazard no comment or conjecture upon them, or upon any part of Mr. Thomson's works,[95] neither need they any defence or apology, after the reception they have had at home, and in the foreign languages into which they have been translated.[96] We shall only say, that, to judge from the imitations of his manner, which have been following him close from the very first publication of *Winter*, he seems to have fixed no inconsiderable æra of the English poetry.

ODE

ON

THE DEATH OF MR. THOMSON.

BY WILLIAM COLLINS.

TO

GEORGE LYTTELTON, ESQ.

THIS ODE

IS INSCRIBED BY THE AUTHOR.

ADVERTISEMENT.—*The scene of the following stanzas is supposed to lie on the Thames, near Richmond.*

I.

In yonder grave a druid lies,
Where slowly winds the stealing wave!
The year's best sweets shall duteous rise
To deck its poet's sylvan grave!

II.

In yon deep bed of whispering reeds
His airy harp* shall now be laid,
That he whose heart in sorrow bleeds
May love through life the soothing shade.

III.

Then maids and youths shall linger here,
And while its sounds at distance swell,
Shall sadly seem in pity's ear
To hear the woodland pilgrim's knell.

IV.

Remembrance oft shall haunt the shore
When Thames in summer-wreaths is drest,
And oft suspend the dashing oar
To bid his gentle spirit rest!

V.

And oft as ease and health retire
To breezy lawn, or forest deep,

* The harp of Æolus, of which see a description in the *Castle of Indolence.* [w. c.]

The friend shall view yon whitening spire,*
And 'mid the varied landscape weep.

VI.

But thou, who own'st that earthy bed,
Ah! what will every dirge avail?
Or tears, which love and pity shed,
That mourn beneath the gliding sail!

VII.

Yet lives there one whose heedless eye
Shall scorn thy pale shrine glimmering near?
With him, sweet bard, may fancy die,
And joy desert the blooming year.

VIII.

But thou, lorn stream, whose sullen tide
No sedge-crowned sisters now attend,
Now waft me from the green hill's side
Whose cold turf hides the buried friend!

* Richmond Church. [W. C.]

IX.

And see—the fairy valleys fade,
Dun night has veil'd the solemn view!
Yet once again, dear parted shade,
Meek Nature's child, again adieu!

X.

The genial meads assign'd to bless
Thy life, shall mourn thy early doom;
Their hinds and shepherd-girls shall dress,
With simple hands, thy rural tomb.

XI.

Long, long, thy stone and pointed clay
Shall melt the musing Briton's eyes;
O vales, and wild woods! shall he say,
In yonder grave your druid lies!

The Seasons.[a]

Spring.

THE ARGUMENT.

The subject proposed. Inscribed to the Countess of Hertford. The Season is described as it affects the various parts of nature, ascending from the lower to the higher; and mixed with digressions arising from the subject. Its influence on inanimate matter, on vegetables, on brute animals, and last on man; concluding with a dissuasive from the wild and irregular passion of love, opposed to that of a pure and happy kind.

SPRING.

COME, gentle SPRING, ethereal mildness, come;
And from the bosom of yon dropping cloud,
While music wakes around, veil'd in a shower
Of shadowing roses, on our plains descend.

O Hertford, fitted or to shine in courts
With unaffected grace, or walk the plain
With innocence and meditation join'd
In soft assemblage, listen to my song,
Which thy own season paints; when nature all
Is blooming and benevolent, like thee.

And see where surly Winter passes off,
Far to the north, and calls his ruffian blasts:
His blasts obey, and quit the howling hill,
The shatter'd forest, and the ravag'd vale;
While softer gales succeed, at whose kind touch,

Dissolving snows in livid torrents lost,
The mountains lift their green heads to the sky.
As yet the trembling year is unconfirm'd,
And Winter oft at eve resumes the breeze,
Chills the pale morn, and bids his driving sleets
Deform the day delightless; so that scarce
The bittern knows his time with bill ingulf'd
To shake the sounding marsh; or, from the shore
The plovers when to scatter o'er the heath,
And sing their wild notes to the listening waste.
At last from Aries rolls the bounteous sun,
And the bright Bull receives him. Then no more
The expansive atmosphere is cramp'd with cold;
But, full of life and vivifying soul,
Lifts the light clouds sublime, and spreads them thin,
Fleecy, and white, o'er all surrounding heaven.
Forth fly the tepid airs; and unconfin'd,
Unbinding earth, the moving softness strays.
Joyous, the impatient husbandman perceives
Relenting nature, and his lusty steers
Drives from their stalls to where the well us'd plough
Lies in the furrow, loosen'd from the frost.

There, unrefusing, to the harness'd yoke
They lend their shoulder, and begin their toil,
Cheer'd by the simple song and soaring lark.
Meanwhile, incumbent o'er the shining share
The master leans, removes the obstructing clay,
Winds the whole work, and sidelong lays the glebe.

White, through the neighbouring fields the sower stalks
With measur'd step; and, liberal, throws the grain
Into the faithful bosom of the ground:
The harrow follows harsh, and shuts the scene.

Be gracious, Heaven! for now laborious man
Has done his part. Ye fostering breezes, blow!
Ye softening dews, ye tender showers, descend!
And temper all, thou world-reviving sun,
Into the perfect year! Nor ye who live
In luxury and ease, in pomp and pride,
Think these lost themes unworthy of your ear:
Such themes as these the rural Maro sung
To wide-imperial Rome, in the full height
Of elegance and taste, by Greece refined.
In ancient times, the sacred plough employ'd
The kings and awful fathers of mankind;

And some, with whom compar'd your insect tribes
Are but the beings of a summer's day,
Have held the scale of empire, rul'd the storm
Of mighty war, then with victorious hand,
Disdaining little delicacies, seized
The plough, and greatly independent scorn'd
All the vile stores corruption can bestow.

Ye generous Britons, venerate the plough!
And o'er your hills and long withdrawing vales
Let Autumn spread his treasures to the sun,
Luxuriant and unbounded! As the sea,
Far through his azure turbulent domain,
Your empire owns, and from a thousand shores
Wafts all the pomp of life into your ports,
So with superior boon may your rich soil,
Exuberant, Nature's better blessings pour
O'er every land, the naked nations clothe,
And be the exhaustless granary of a world!

Nor only through the lenient air this change,
Delicious, breathes: the penetrative sun,
His force deep-darting to the dark retreat
Of vegetation, sets the steaming power

At large, to wander o'er the verdant earth,
In various hues; but chiefly thee, gay green!
Thou smiling Nature's universal robe!
United light and shade! where the sight dwells
With growing strength, and ever-new delight.

From the moist meadow to the wither'd hill,
Led by the breeze, the vivid verdure runs;
And swells, and deepens, to the cherished eye.
The hawthorn whitens; and the juicy groves
Put forth their buds, unfolding by degrees,
Till the whole leafy forest stands display'd,
In full luxuriance, to the sighing gales;
Where the deer rustle through the twining brake,
And the birds sing conceal'd. At once, array'd
In all the colours of the flushing year
By Nature's swift and secret-working hand,
The garden glows, and fills the liberal air
With lavish fragrance; while the promised fruit,
Lies yet a little embryo, unperceived,
Within its crimson folds. Now from the town,
Buried in smoke, and sleep, and noisome damps,
Oft let me wander o'er the dewy fields,

Where freshness breathes, and dash the trembling drops
From the bent bush, as through the verdant maze
Of sweetbriar hedges I pursue my walk;
Or taste the smell of dairy; or ascend
Some eminence, Augusta, in thy plains,
And see the country, far-diffus'd around,
One boundless blush, one white-empurpled shower
Of mingled blossoms: where the raptur'd eye
Hurries from joy to joy; and, hid beneath
The fair profusion, yellow Autumn spies.

If, brush'd from Russian wilds, a cutting gale
Rise not, and scatter from his humid wings
The clammy mildew; or, dry-blowing, breathe
Untimely frost—before whose baleful blast
The full-blown Spring through all her foliage shrinks,
Joyless and dead, a wide-dejected waste.
For oft, engender'd by the hazy north,
Myriads on myriads, insect armies waft
Keen in the poison'd breeze; and wasteful eat,
Through buds and bark, into the blacken'd core
Their eager way. A feeble race! yet oft
The sacred sons of vengeance! on whose course

Corrosive famine waits, and kills the year.
To check this plague, the skilful farmer chaff
And blazing straw before his orchard burns—
Till, all involv'd in smoke, the latent foe
From every cranny suffocated falls;
Or scatters o'er the blooms the pungent dust
Of pepper, fatal to the frosty tribe;
Or, when the envenom'd leaf begins to curl,
With sprinkled water drowns them in their nest:
Nor, while they pick them up with busy bill,
The little trooping birds unwisely scares.

Be patient, swains; these cruel-seeming winds
Blow not in vain. Far hence they keep, repress'd,
Those deepening clouds on clouds, surcharged with rain,
That o'er the vast Atlantic hither borne,
In endless train, would quench the summer blaze,
And, cheerless, drown the crude unripen'd year.

The north-east spends his rage, and now shut up
Within his iron caves—the effusive south
Warms the wide air, and o'er the void of heaven
Breathes the big clouds with vernal showers distent.
At first a dusky wreath they seem to rise,

Scarce staining ether; but by fast degrees,
In heaps on heaps, the doubling vapour sails
Along the loaded sky, and mingling deep,
Sits on the horizon round a settled gloom:
Not such as wintry storms on mortals shed,
Oppressing life; but lovely, gentle, kind,
And full of every hope and every joy,
The wish of Nature. Gradual sinks the breeze
Into a perfect calm; that not a breath
Is heard to quiver through the closing woods,
Or rustling turn the many-twinkling leaves
Of aspen tall. The uncurling floods, diffus'd
In glassy breadth, seem through delusive lapse
Forgetful of their course. 'Tis silence all,
And pleasing expectation. Herds and flocks
Drop the dry sprig, and, mute-imploring, eye
The falling verdure. Hush'd in short suspense,
The plumy people streak their wings with oil,
To throw the lucid moisture trickling off;
And wait the approaching sign to strike, at once,
Into the general choir. Even mountains, vales,
And forests seem, impatient, to demand

The promis'd sweetness. Man superior walks
Amid the glad creation, musing praise,
And looking lively gratitude. At last,
The clouds consign their treasures to the fields;
And, softly shaking on the dimpled pool
Prelusive drops, let all their moisture flow,
In large effusion, o'er the freshen'd world.
The stealing shower is scarce to patter heard,
By such as wander through the forest walks,
Beneath the umbrageous multitude of leaves.
But who can hold the shade, while Heaven descends
In universal bounty, shedding herbs,
And fruits, and flowers, on Nature's ample lap?
Swift fancy fir'd anticipates their growth;
And, while the milky nutriment distils,
Beholds the kindling country colour round.

Thus all day long the full-distended clouds
Indulge their genial stores, and well-shower'd earth
Is deep-enrich'd with vegetable life;
Till, in the western sky, the downward sun
Looks out, effulgent, from amid the flush
Of broken clouds, gay-shifting to his beam.

The rapid radiance instantaneous strikes
The illumin'd mountain; through the forest streams;
Shakes on the floods; and in a yellow mist,
Far smoking o'er the interminable plain,
In twinkling myriads lights the dewy gems.
Moist, bright, and green, the landscape laughs around.
Full swell the woods; their every music wakes,
Mix'd in wild concert, with the warbling brooks
Increas'd, the distant bleatings of the hills,
The hollow lows responsive from the vales,
Whence blending all the sweeten'd zephyr springs.
Meantime, refracted from yon eastern cloud,
Bestriding earth, the grand ethereal bow
Shoots up immense; and every hue unfolds,
In fair proportion running from the red
To where the violet fades into the sky.
Here, awful Newton, the dissolving clouds
Form, fronting on the sun, thy showery prism;
And to the sage-instructed eye unfold
The various twine of light, by thee disclos'd
From the white mingling maze. Not so the swain:
He wondering views the bright enchantment bend,

Delightful, o'er the radiant fields, and runs
To catch the falling glory; but amaz'd
Beholds the amusive arch before him fly,
Then vanish quite away. Still night succeeds,
A soften'd shade; and saturated earth
Awaits the morning beam, to give to light,
Rais'd through ten thousand different plastic tubes,
The balmy treasures of the former day.

Then spring the living herbs, profusely wild,
O'er all the deep-green earth, beyond the power
Of botanist to number up their tribes:
Whether he steals along the lonely dale,
In silent search; or through the forest, rank
With what the dull incurious weeds account,
Bursts his blind way; or climbs the mountain rock,
Fir'd by the nodding verdure of its brow.
With such a liberal hand has Nature flung
Their seeds abroad, blown them about in winds,
Innumerous mix'd them with the nursing mould,
The moistening current, and prolific rain.

But who their virtues can declare? who pierce,
With vision pure, into these secret stores

Of health, and life, and joy? the food of man,
While yet he liv'd in innocence, and told
A length of golden years, unflesh'd in blood;
A stranger to the savage arts of life,
Death, rapine, carnage, surfeit, and disease—
The lord, and not the tyrant, of the world.

The first fresh dawn then wak'd the gladden'd race
Of uncorrupted man, nor blush'd to see
The sluggard sleep beneath its sacred beam;
For their light slumbers gently fum'd away,
And up they rose as vigorous as the sun,
Or to the culture of the willing glebe,
Or to the cheerful tendance of the flock.
Meantime the song went round; and dance and sport,
Wisdom and friendly talk, successive stole
Their hours away: while in the rosy vale
Love breath'd his infant sighs, from anguish free,
And full replete with bliss; save the sweet pain
That, inly thrilling, but exalts it more.
Nor yet injurious act, nor surly deed,
Was known among these happy sons of heaven;
For reason and benevolence were law.

Harmonious Nature too look'd smiling on.
Clear shone the skies, cool'd with eternal gales,
And balmy spirit all. The youthful sun
Shot his best rays, and still the gracious clouds
Dropp'd fatness down; as, o'er the swelling mead,
The herds and flocks, commixing, play'd secure.
This when, emergent from the gloomy wood,
The glaring lion saw, his horrid heart
Was mecken'd, and he joined his sullen joy;
For music held the whole in perfect peace:
Soft sigh'd the flute; the tender voice was heard,
Warbling the varied heart; the woodlands round
Applied their quire; and winds and waters flow'd
In consonance. Such were those prime of days.

But now those white unblemish'd minutes, whence
The fabling poets took their golden age,
Are found no more amid these iron times,
These dregs of life! Now the distemper'd mind
Has lost that concord of harmonious powers,
Which forms the soul of happiness; and all
Is off the poise within: the passions all
Have burst their bounds; and reason half-extinct,

Or impotent, or else approving, sees
The foul disorder. Senseless and deform'd,
Convulsive anger storms at large; or, pale
And silent, settles into fell revenge.
Base envy withers at another's joy,
And hates that excellence it cannot reach.
Desponding fear, of feeble fancies full,
Weak and unmanly, loosens every power.
Even love itself is bitterness of soul,
A pensive anguish pining at the heart;
Or, sunk to sordid interest, feels no more
That noble wish, that never-cloy'd desire,
Which, selfish joy disdaining, seeks alone
To bless the dearer object of its flame.
Hope sickens with extravagance; and grief,
Of life impatient, into madness swells,
Or in dead silence wastes the weeping hours.
These, and a thousand mix'd emotions more,
From ever-changing views of good and ill,
Form'd infinitely various, vex the mind
With endless storm; whence, deeply rankling, grows
The partial thought, a listless unconcern,

Cold, and averting from our neighbour's good;
Then dark disgust, and hatred, winding wiles,
Coward deceit, and ruffian violence.
At last, extinct each social feeling, fell
And joyless inhumanity pervades
And petrifies the heart. Nature disturb'd
Is deem'd, vindictive, to have changed her course.

Hence, in old dusky time, a deluge came:
When the deep-cleft disparting orb, that arch'd
The central waters round, impetuous rush'd,
With universal burst, into the gulf,
And o'er the high-pil'd hills of fractured earth
Wide dash'd the waves, in undulation vast;
Till, from the centre to the streaming clouds,
A shoreless ocean tumbled round the globe.

The Seasons since have, with severer sway,
Oppress'd a broken world: the Winter keen
Shook forth his waste of snows; and Summer shot
His pestilential heats. Great Spring, before,
Green'd all the year; and fruits and blossoms blush'd,
In social sweetness, on the self-same bough.
Pure was the temperate air; an even calm

Perpetual reign'd, save what the zephyrs bland
Breath'd o'er the blue expanse: for then nor storms
Were taught to blow, nor hurricanes to rage;
Sound slept the waters; no sulphureous glooms
Swell'd in the sky, and sent the lightning forth;
While sickly damps, and cold autumnal fogs,
Hung not, relaxing, on the springs of life.
But now, of turbid elements the sport,
From clear to cloudy toss'd, from hot to cold,
And dry to moist, with inward-eating change,
Our drooping days are dwindled down to nought,
Their period finish'd ere 'tis well begun.

And yet the wholesome herb neglected dies;
Though with the pure exhilarating soul
Of nutriment, and health, and vital powers,
Beyond the search of art, 'tis copious blest.
For, with hot ravin fir'd, ensanguin'd man
Is now become the lion of the plain,
And worse. The wolf, who from the nightly fold
Fierce-drags the bleating prey, ne'er drunk her milk,
Nor wore her warming fleece; nor has the steer,
At whose strong chest the deadly tiger hangs,

E'er plough'd for him. They too are temper'd high,
With hunger stung and wild necessity;
Nor lodges pity in their shaggy breast.
But man, whom Nature form'd of milder clay,
With every kind emotion in his heart,
And taught alone to weep—while from her lap
She pours ten thousand delicacies, herbs,
And fruits, as numerous as the drops of rain
Or beams that gave them birth—shall he, fair form!
Who wears sweet smiles, and looks erect on heaven,
E'er stoop to mingle with the prowling herd,
And dip his tongue in gore? The beast of prey
Blood-stain'd deserves to bleed; but you, ye flocks,
What have you done? ye peaceful people, what,
To merit death? you, who have given us milk
In luscious streams, and lent us your own coat
Against the Winter's cold? And the plain ox,
That harmless, honest, guileless animal,
In what has he offended? he, whose toil,
Patient and ever-ready, clothes the land
With all the pomp of harvest—shall he bleed,
And struggling groan beneath the cruel hands

Even of the clowns he feeds? and that, perhaps,
To swell the riot of the autumnal feast,
Won by his labour. This the feeling heart
Would tenderly suggest; but 'tis enough,
In this late age, adventurous, to have touch'd
Light on the numbers of the Samian sage.
High Heaven forbids the bold presumptuous strain,
Whose wisest will has fix'd us in a state
That must not yet to pure perfection rise:
Besides, who knows, how rais'd to higher life,
From stage to stage, the vital scale ascends?

Now, when the first foul torrent of the brooks,
Swell'd with the vernal rains, is ebb'd away—
And, whitening, down their mossy-tinctur'd stream
Descends the billowy foam—now is the time,
While yet the dark brown water aids the guile,
To tempt the trout. The well-dissembled fly,
The rod fine-tapering with elastic spring,
Snatch'd from the hoary steed the floating line,
And all thy slender watery stores, prepare.
But let not on thy hook the tortur'd worm,
Convulsive, twist in agonizing folds;

Which, by rapacious hunger swallow'd deep,
Gives, as you tear it from the bleeding breast
Of the weak, helpless, uncomplaining wretch,
Harsh pain and horror to the tender hand.

When, with his lively ray, the potent sun
Has pierc'd the streams, and rous'd the finny race,
Then, issuing cheerful, to thy sport repair;
Chief should the western breezes curling play,
And light o'er ether bear the shadowy clouds.
High to their fount, this day, amid the hills,
And woodlands warbling round, trace up the brooks;
The next, pursue their rocky channell'd maze,
Down to the river, in whose ample wave
Their little naiads love to sport at large.
Just in the dubious point, where with the pool
Is mix'd the trembling stream, or where it boils
Around the stone, or from the hollow'd bank
Reverted plays in undulating flow,
There throw, nice-judging, the delusive fly;
And, as you lead it round in artful curve,
With eye attentive mark the springing game.
Straight as above the surface of the flood

They wanton rise, or urg'd by hunger leap,
Then fix, with gentle twitch, the barbed hook;
Some lightly tossing to the grassy bank,
And to the shelving shore slow dragging some,
With various hand proportion'd to their force.
If yet too young, and easily deceiv'd,
A worthless prey scarce bends your pliant rod,
Him, piteous of his youth, and the short space
He has enjoy'd the vital light of heaven,
Soft disengage, and back into the stream
The speckled infant throw. But should you lure
From his dark haunt, beneath the tangled roots
Of pendent trees, the monarch of the brook,
Behoves you then to ply your finest art.
Long time he, following cautious, scans the fly;
And oft attempts to seize it, but as oft
The dimpled water speaks his jealous fear.
At last, while haply o'er the shaded sun
Passes a cloud, he desperate takes the death,
With sullen plunge. At once he darts along,
Deep-struck, and runs out all the lengthen'd line;
Then seeks the farthest ooze, the sheltering weed,

The cavern'd bank, his old secure abode;
And flies aloft, and flounces round the pool,
Indignant of the guile. With yielding hand,
That feels him still, yet to his furious course
Gives way, you, now retiring, following now
Across the stream, exhaust his idle rage;
Till, floating broad upon his breathless side,
And to his fate abandon'd, to the shore
You gaily drag your unresisting prize.

Thus pass the temperate hours: but when the sun
Shakes from his noonday throne the scattering clouds,
Even shooting listless languor through the deeps,
Then seek the bank where flowering elders crowd,
Where scatter'd wild the lily of the vale
Its balmy essence breathes, where cowslips hang
The dewy head, where purple violets lurk,
With all the lowly children of the shade;
Or lie reclined beneath yon spreading ash
Hung o'er the steep, whence born on liquid wing
The sounding culver shoots; or where the hawk
High in the beetling cliff his eyry builds.
There let the classic page thy fancy lead

Through rural scenes, such as the Mantuan swain
Paints in the matchless harmony of song;
Or catch thyself the landscape, gliding swift
Athwart imagination's vivid eye;
Or, by the vocal woods and waters lull'd,
And lost in lonely musing, in a dream,
Confus'd, of careless solitude, where mix
Ten thousand wandering images of things,
Soothe every gust of passion into peace—
All but the swellings of the soften'd heart,
That waken, not disturb, the tranquil mind.

Behold, yon breathing prospect bids the muse
Throw all her beauty forth. But who can paint
Like Nature? Can imagination boast,
Amid its gay creation, hues like hers?
Or can it mix them with that matchless skill,
And lose them in each other, as appears
In every bud that blows? If fancy, then,
Unequal fails beneath the pleasing task,
Ah, what shall language do? ah, where find words
Ting'd with so many colours; and whose power,
To life approaching, may perfume my lays

With that fine oil, those aromatic gales,
That inexhaustive flow continual round?
Yet, though successless, will the toil delight.
Come then, ye virgins and ye youths whose hearts
Have felt the raptures of refining love;
And thou, Amanda, come, pride of my song!
Form'd by the graces, loveliness itself!
Come with those downcast eyes, sedate and sweet,
Those looks demure, that deeply pierce the soul—
Where, with the light of thoughtful reason mix'd,
Shines lively fancy, and the feeling heart:
Oh come! and while the rosy-footed May
Steals blushing on, together let us tread
The morning dews, and gather in their prime
Fresh-blooming flowers, to grace thy braided hair,
And thy lov'd bosom that improves their sweets.
See, where the winding vale its lavish stores,
Irriguous spreads. See, how the lily drinks
The latent rill, scarce oozing through the grass,
Of growth luxuriant; or the humid bank,
In fair profusion, decks. Long let us walk,
Where the breeze blows from yon extended field

Of blossom'd beans. Arabia cannot boast
A fuller gale of joy than, liberal, thence
Breathes through the sense, and takes the ravish'd soul.
Nor is the mead unworthy of thy foot,
Full of fresh verdure, and unnumber'd flowers,
The negligence of Nature, wide and wild;
Where, undisguis'd by mimic art, she spreads
Unbounded beauty to the roving eye.
Here their delicious task the fervent bees,
In swarming millions, tend: around, athwart,
Through the soft air the busy nations fly,
Cling to the bud, and with inserted tube
Suck its pure essence, its ethereal soul;
And oft, with bolder wing, they soaring dare
The purple heath, or where the wild-thyme grows,
And yellow load them with the luscious spoil.

At length the finish'd garden to the view
Its vistas opens, and its alleys green.
Snatch'd through the verdant maze, the hurried eye
Distracted wanders: now the bowery walk
Of covert close, where scarce a speck of day
Falls on the lengthen'd gloom, protracted sweeps;

Now meets the bending sky; the river now
Dimpling along, the breezy-ruffled lake,
The forest darkening round, the glittering spire,
The ethereal mountain, and the distant main.
But why so far excursive? when at hand,
Along these blushing borders, bright with dew,
And in yon mingled wilderness of flowers,
Fair-handed Spring unbosoms every grace:
Throws out the snowdrop and the crocus first;
The daisy, primrose, violet darkly blue,
And polyanthus of unnumber'd dyes;
The yellow wallflower, stain'd with iron-brown;
And lavish stock that scents the garden round;
From the soft wing of vernal breezes shed,
Anemones; auriculas, enrich'd
With shining meal o'er all their velvet leaves;
And full ranunculus', of glowing red.
Then comes the tulip-race, where beauty plays
Her idle freaks: from family diffus'd
To family, as flies the father-dust,
The varied colours run; and, while they *break*
On the charm'd eye, the exulting florist marks,

With secret pride, the wonders of his hand.
No gradual bloom is wanting; from the bud,
First-born of Spring, to Summer's musky tribes:
Nor hyacinths, of purest virgin-white,
Low-bent, and blushing inward; nor jonquils,
Of potent fragrance; nor narcissus fair,
As o'er the fabled fountain hanging still;
Nor broad carnations; nor gay-spotted pinks;
Nor, shower'd from every bush, the damask-rose.
Infinite numbers, delicacies, smells,
With hues on hues expression cannot paint,
The breath of Nature, and her endless bloom.
Hail, Source of Beings! Universal Soul
Of heaven and earth! Essential Presence, hail!
To thee I bend the knee; to thee my thoughts,
Continual, climb; who, with a master-hand,
Hast the great whole into perfection touch'd.
By thee the various vegetative tribes,
Wrapt in a filmy net, and clad with leaves,
Draw the live ether, and imbibe the dew.
By thee dispos'd into congenial soils,
Stands each attractive plant, and sucks, and swells

The juicy tide; a twining mass of tubes.
At thy command the vernal sun awakes
The torpid sap, detruded to the root
By wintry winds, that now in fluent dance,
And lively fermentation, mounting, spreads
All this innumerous-colour'd scene of things.

As rising from the vegetable world
My theme ascends, with equal wing ascend,
My panting muse; and hark, how loud the woods
Invite you forth in all your gayest trim.
Lend me your song, ye nightingales! oh pour
The mazy-running soul of melody
Into my varied verse! while I deduce,
From the first note the hollow cuckoo sings,
The symphony of Spring, and touch a theme
Unknown to fame—the passion of the groves.

When first the soul of love is sent abroad,
Warm through the vital air, and on the heart
Harmonious seizes, the gay troops begin,
In gallant thought, to plume the painted wing;
And try again the long-forgotten strain,
At first faint-warbled. But no sooner grows

The soft infusion prevalent, and wide,
Than, all alive, at once their joy o'erflows
In music unconfin'd. Up springs the lark,
Shrill-voic'd and loud, the messenger of morn:
Ere yet the shadows fly, he mounted sings
Amid the dawning clouds, and from their haunts
Calls up the tuneful nations. Every copse
Deep-tangled, tree irregular, and bush
Bending with dewy moisture, o'er the heads
Of the coy quiristers that lodge within,
Are prodigal of harmony. The thrush
And woodlark, o'er the kind contending throng
Superior heard, run through the sweetest length
Of notes; when listening philomela deigns
To let them joy, and purposes, in thought
Elate, to make her night excel their day.
The blackbird whistles from the thorny brake;
The mellow bullfinch answers from the grove;
Nor are the linnets, o'er the flowering furze
Pour'd out profusely, silent: join'd to these
Innumerous songsters, in the freshening shade
Of new-sprung leaves, their modulations mix

Mellifluous. The jay, the rook, the daw,
And each harsh pipe, discordant heard alone,
Aid the full concert; while the stockdove breathes
A melancholy murmur through the whole.

'Tis love creates their melody, and all
This waste of music is the voice of love;
That even to birds and beasts the tender arts
Of pleasing teaches. Hence the glossy kind
Try every winning way inventive love
Can dictate, and in courtship to their mates
Pour forth their little souls. First, wide, around,
With distant awe, in airy rings they rove,
Endeavouring by a thousand tricks to catch
The cunning, conscious, half-averted glance
Of their regardless charmer. Should she seem,
Softening, the least approvance to bestow,
Their colours burnish, and, by hope inspir'd,
They brisk advance; then, on a sudden struck,
Retire disorder'd; then again approach;
In fond rotation spread the spotted wing,
And shiver every feather with desire.

Connubial leagues agreed, to the deep woods

They haste away, all as their fancy leads,
Pleasure, or food, or secret safety prompts;
That Nature's great command may be obey'd,
Nor all the sweet sensations they perceive
Indulg'd in vain. Some to the holly-hedge
Nestling repair, and to the thicket some;
Some to the rude protection of the thorn
Commit their feeble offspring. The cleft tree
Offers its kind concealment to a few,
Their food its insects, and its moss their nests.
Others, apart, far in the grassy dale,
Or roughening waste, their humble texture weave.
But most in woodland solitudes delight,
In unfrequented glooms, or shaggy banks,
Steep, and divided by a babbling brook,
Whose murmurs soothe them all the livelong day,
When by kind duty fix'd. Among the roots
Of hazel, pendent o'er the plaintive stream,
They frame the first foundation of their domes;
Dry sprigs of trees, in artful fabric laid,
And bound with clay together. Now 'tis nought
But restless hurry through the busy air,

Beat by unnumber'd wings. The swallow sweeps
The slimy pool, to build his hanging house
Intent. And often, from the careless back
Of herds and flocks, a thousand tugging bills
Pluck hair and wool; and oft, when unobserv'd,
Steal from the barn a straw: till soft and warm,
Clean and complete, their habitation grows.

As thus the patient dam assiduous sits,
Not to be tempted from her tender task,
Or by sharp hunger, or by smooth delight,
Though the whole loosen'd Spring around her blows,
Her sympathizing lover takes his stand
High on the opponent bank, and ceaseless sings
The tedious time away; or else supplies
Her place a moment, while she sudden flits
To pick the scanty meal. The appointed time
With pious toil fulfill'd, the callow young,
Warm'd and expanded into perfect life,
Their brittle bondage break, and come to light;
A helpless family, demanding food
With constant clamour. Oh, what passions then,
What melting sentiments of kindly care,

On the new parents seize! Away they fly,
Affectionate, and undesiring bear
The most delicious morsel to their young;
Which equally distributed, again
The search begins. Even so a gentle pair,
By fortune sunk, but form'd of generous mould,
And charm'd with cares beyond the vulgar breast,
In some lone cot amid the distant woods,
Sustain'd alone by providential Heaven,
Oft, as they weeping eye their infant train,
Check their own appetites and give them all.

Nor toil alone they scorn: exalting love,
By the great Father of the Spring inspir'd,
Gives instant courage to the fearful race,
And to the simple, art. With stealthy wing,
Should some rude foot their woody haunts molest,
Amid a neighbouring bush they silent drop,
And whirring thence, as if alarm'd, deceive
The unfeeling schoolboy. Hence, around the head
Of wandering swain, the white-wing'd plover wheels
Her sounding flight, and then directly on
In long excursion skims the level lawn,

To tempt him from her nest. The wild-duck, hence,
O'er the rough moss, and o'er the trackless waste
The heath-hen flutters, pious fraud! to lead
The hot pursuing spaniel far astray.

Be not the muse asham'd here to bemoan
Her brothers of the grove, by tyrant man
Inhuman caught, and in the narrow cage
From liberty confin'd, and boundless air.
Dull are the pretty slaves, their plumage dull,
Ragged, and all its brightening lustre lost;
Nor is that sprightly wildness in their notes,
Which, clear and vigorous, warbles from the beech.
Oh then, ye friends of love and love-taught song,
Spare the soft tribes, this barbarous art forbear!
If on your bosom innocence can win,
Music engage, or piety persuade.

But let not chief the nightingale lament
Her ruin'd care, too delicately fram'd
To brook the harsh confinement of the cage.
Oft when, returning with her loaded bill,
The astonish'd mother finds a vacant nest,
By the hard hand of unrelenting clowns

Robb'd, to the ground the vain provision falls;
Her pinions ruffle, and, low-drooping, scarce
Can bear the mourner to the poplar shade,
Where all abandon'd to despair she sings
Her sorrows through the night; and, on the bough
Sole-sitting, still at every dying fall
Takes up again her lamentable strain
Of winding woe, till wide around the woods
Sigh to her song, and with her wail resound.

But now the feather'd youth their former bounds,
Ardent, disdain; and, weighing oft their wings,
Demand the free possession of the sky.
This one glad office more, and then dissolves
Parental love at once, now needless grown:
Unlavish Wisdom never works in vain.
'Tis on some evening, sunny, grateful, mild,
When nought but balm is breathing through the woods,
With yellow lustre bright, that the new tribes
Visit the spacious heavens, and look abroad
On Nature's common, far as they can see
Or wing their range and pasture. O'er the boughs
Dancing about, still at the giddy verge

Their resolution fails—their pinions still,
In loose libration stretch'd, to trust the void
Trembling refuse—till down before them fly
The parent guides, and chide, exhort, command,
Or push them off. The surging air receives
The plumy burden; and their self-taught wings
Winnow the waving element. On ground
Alighted, bolder up again they lead,
Farther and farther on, the lengthening flight;
Till, vanish'd every fear, and every power
Rous'd into life and action, light in air
The acquitted parents see their soaring race,
And, once rejoicing, never know them more.

High from the summit of a craggy cliff,
Hung o'er the deep, such as amazing frowns
On utmost Kilda's[1] shore, whose lonely race
Resign the setting sun to Indian worlds,
The royal eagle draws his vigorous young;
Strong-pounc'd, and ardent with paternal fire.
Now fit to raise a kingdom of their own,
He drives them from his fort, the towering seat,
For ages, of his empire; which, in peace,

Unstain'd he holds, while many a league to sea
He wings his course, and preys in distant isles.
Should I my steps turn to the rural seat,
Whose lofty elms and venerable oaks
Invite the rook, who high amid the boughs,
In early Spring, his airy city builds,
And ceaseless caws amusive—there, well-pleas'd,
I might the various polity survey
Of the mix'd household-kind. The careful hen
Calls all her chirping family around,
Fed and defended by the fearless cock;
Whose breast with ardour flames, as on he walks
Graceful, and crows defiance. In the pond,
The finely chequer'd duck before her train
Rows garrulous. The stately-sailing swan
Gives out his snowy plumage to the gale;
And, arching proud his neck, with oary feet
Bears forward fierce, and guards his osier-isle,
Protective of his young. The turkey nigh,
Loud-threatening, reddens; while the peacock spreads
His every-colour'd glory to the sun,
And swims in radiant majesty along.

O'er the whole homely scene, the cooing dove
Flies thick in amorous chase, and wanton rolls
The glancing eye, and turns the changeful neck.
While thus the gentle tenants of the shade
Indulge their purer loves, the rougher world
Of brutes, below, rush furious into flame
And fierce desire. Through all his lusty veins
The bull, deep-scorch'd, the raging passion feels.
Of pasture sick, and negligent of food,
Scarce seen, he wades among the yellow broom,
While o'er his ample sides the rambling sprays
Luxuriant shoot; or through the mazy wood
Dejected wanders, nor the enticing bud
Crops, though it presses on his careless sense.
And oft, in jealous maddening fancy wrapt,
He seeks the fight; and, idly butting, feigns
His rival gor'd in every knotty trunk.
Him should he meet, the bellowing war begins:
Their eyes flash fury; to the hollow'd earth,
Whence the sand flies, they mutter bloody deeds,
And groaning deep the impetuous battle mix;
While the fair heifer, balmy-breathing, near,

Stands kindling up their rage. The trembling steed,
With this hot impulse seiz'd in every nerve,
Nor heeds the rein, nor hears the sounding thong:
Blows are not felt; but, tossing high his head,
And by the well-known joy to distant plains
Attracted strong, all wild he bursts away;
O'er rocks, and woods, and craggy mountains flies;
And, neighing, on the aërial summit takes
The exciting gale; then, steep-descending, cleaves
The headlong torrents foaming down the hills,
Even where the madness of the straiten'd stream
Turns in black eddies round—such is the force
With which his frantic heart and sinews swell.

Nor undelighted by the boundless Spring
Are the broad monsters of the foaming deep:
From the deep ooze and gelid cavern rous'd,
They flounce and tumble in unwieldy joy.
Dire were the strain, and dissonant, to sing
The cruel raptures of the savage kind;
How, by this flame their native wrath sublim'd,
They roam, amid the fury of their heart,
The far-resounding waste in fiercer bands,

And growl their horrid loves. But this, the theme
I sing, enraptur'd, to the British fair,
Forbids; and leads me to the mountain brow,
Where sits the shepherd on the grassy turf,
Inhaling, healthful, the descending sun.
Around him feeds his many-bleating flock,
Of various cadence; and his sportive lambs,
This way and that convolv'd, in friskful glee,
Their frolics play. And now the sprightly race
Invites them forth; when swift, the signal given,
They start away, and sweep the massy mound
That runs around the hill; the rampart once
Of iron war, in ancient barbarous times,
When disunited Briton ever bled,
Lost in eternal broil: ere yet she grew
To this deep-laid indissoluble state,
Where wealth and commerce lift the golden head;
And, o'er our labours, liberty and law
Impartial watch—the wonder of a world!

What is this mighty breath, ye curious, say,
That, in a powerful language, felt not heard,
Instructs the fowls of heaven; and through their breast

These arts of love diffuses? What, but God?
Inspiring God! who, boundless spirit all,
And unremitting energy, pervades,
Adjusts, sustains, and agitates the whole.
He ceaseless works alone, and yet alone
Seems not to work; with such perfection fram'd
Is this complex stupendous scheme of things.
But, though conceal'd, to every purer eye
The informing Author in his works appears:
Chief, lovely Spring, in thee, and thy soft scenes,
The Smiling God is seen; while water, earth,
And air attest his bounty—which exalts
The brute creation to this finer thought,
And annual melts their undesigning hearts
Profusely thus in tenderness and joy.

Still let my song a nobler note assume,
And sing the infusive force of Spring on man;
When heaven and earth, as if contending, vie
To raise his being, and serene his soul.
Can he forbear to join the general smile
Of Nature? can fierce passions vex his breast,
While every gale is peace, and every grove

Is melody? Hence! from the bounteous walks
Of flowing Spring, ye sordid sons of earth,
Hard, and unfeeling of another's woe,
Or only lavish to yourselves; away!
But come, ye generous minds, in whose wide thought,
Of all his works, creative bounty burns
With warmest beam; and on your open front
And liberal eye sits, from his dark retreat
Inviting modest want. Nor till invok'd
Can restless goodness wait: your active search
Leaves no cold wintry corner unexplor'd;
Like silent-working Heaven, surprising oft
The lonely heart with unexpected good.
For you the roving spirit of the wind
Blows Spring abroad; for you the teeming clouds
Descend in gladsome plenty o'er the world;
And the sun sheds his kindest rays for you,
Ye flower of human race! In these green days,
Reviving sickness lifts her languid head;
Life flows afresh; and young-ey'd health exalts
The whole creation round. Contentment walks
The sunny glade, and feels an inward bliss

Spring o'er his mind, beyond the power of kings
To purchase. Pure serenity apace
Induces thought, and contemplation still.
By swift degrees the love of nature works,
And warms the bosom; till at last, sublim'd
To rapture and enthusiastic heat,
We feel the present Deity, and taste
The joy of God to see a happy world!
These are the sacred feelings of thy heart,
Thy heart inform'd by reason's purer ray,
O Lyttelton, the friend! thy passions thus
And meditations vary, as at large,
Courting the muse, through Hagley Park you stray;
Thy British Tempè! There along the dale,
With woods o'erhung, and shagg'd with mossy rocks,
Whence on each hand the gushing waters play,
And down the rough cascade white-dashing fall,
Or gleam in lengthen'd vista through the trees,
You silent steal; or sit beneath the shade
Of solemn oaks, that tuft the swelling mounts
Thrown graceful round by Nature's careless hand,
And pensive listen to the various voice

Of rural peace: the herds, the flocks, the birds,
The hollow-whispering breeze, the plaint of rills,
That, purling down amid the twisted roots
Which creep around, their dewy murmurs shake
On the sooth'd ear. From these abstracted oft,
You wander through the philosophic world;
Where in bright train continual wonders rise,
Or to the curious or the pious eye.
And oft, conducted by historic truth,
You tread the long extent of backward time:
Planning, with warm benevolence of mind,
And honest zeal unwarp'd by party rage,
Britannia's weal; how from the venal gulf
To raise her virtue, and her arts revive.
Or, turning thence thy view, these graver thoughts
The muses charm; while, with sure taste refin'd,
You draw the inspiring breath of ancient song,
Till nobly rises, emulous, thy own.
Perhaps thy lov'd Lucinda shares thy walk,
With soul to thine attun'd. Then nature all
Wears to the lover's eye a look of love;
And all the tumult of a guilty world,

Toss'd by ungenerous passions, sinks away.
The tender heart is animated peace;
And as it pours its copious treasures forth,
In varied converse, softening every theme,
You, frequent-pausing, turn, and from her eyes,
Where meeken'd sense, and amiable grace,
And lively sweetness dwell, enraptur'd drink
That nameless spirit of ethereal joy,
Inimitable happiness! which love
Alone bestows, and on a *favour'd few*.
Meantime you gain the height, from whose fair brow
The bursting prospect spreads immense around;
And snatch'd o'er hill and dale, and wood and lawn,
And verdant field, and darkening heath between,
And villages embosom'd soft in trees,
And spiry towns by surging columns mark'd
Of household smoke, your eye excursive roams;
Wide-stretching from the hall, in whose kind haunt
The hospitable genius lingers still,
To where the broken landscape, by degrees
Ascending, roughens into rigid hills—
O'er which the Cambrian mountains, like far clouds

That skirt the blue horizon, dusky rise.
Flush'd by the spirit of the genial year,
Now from the virgin's cheek a fresher bloom
Shoots, less and less, the live carnation round;
Her lips blush deeper sweets; she breathes of youth;
The shining moisture swells into her eyes
In brighter flow; her wishing bosom heaves
With palpitations wild; kind tumults seize
Her veins, and all her yielding soul is love.
From the keen gaze her lover turns away,
Full of the dear ecstatic power, and sick
With sighing languishment. Ah then, ye fair!
Be greatly cautious of your sliding hearts:
Dare not the infectious sigh; the pleading look,
Downcast and low, in meek submission drest,
But full of guile. Let not the fervent tongue,
Prompt to deceive, with adulation smooth,
Gain on your purpos'd will. Nor in the bower,
Where woodbines flaunt and roses shed a couch,
While evening draws her crimson curtains round,
Trust your soft minutes with betraying man.
And let the aspiring youth beware of love,

Of the smooth glance beware; for 'tis too late,
When on his heart the torrent-softness pours.
Then wisdom prostrate lies, and fading fame
Dissolves in air away; while the fond soul,
Wrapt in gay visions of unreal bliss,
Still paints the illusive form, the kindling grace,
The enticing smile, the modest-seeming eye,
Beneath whose beauteous beams, belying heaven,
Lurk searchless cunning, cruelty, and death;
And still, false-warbling in his cheated ear,
Her siren voice, enchanting, draws him on
To guileful shores, and meads of fatal joy.

Even present, in the very lap of love
Inglorious laid—while music flows around,
Perfumes, and oils, and wine, and wanton hours—
Amid the roses, fierce repentance rears
Her snaky crest: a quick-returning pang
Shoots through the conscious heart; where honour still,
And great design, against the oppressive load
Of luxury, by fits, impatient heave.

But absent, what fantastic woes, arous'd,
Rage in each thought, by restless musing fed,

Chill the warm cheek, and blast the bloom of life!
Neglected fortune flies; and, sliding swift,
Prone into ruin fall his scorn'd affairs.
'Tis nought but gloom around. The darken'd sun
Loses his light. The rosy-bosom'd Spring
To weeping fancy pines; and yon bright arch,
Contracted, bends into a dusky vault.
All nature fades extinct; and she alone
Heard, felt, and seen, possesses every thought,
Fills every sense, and pants in every vein.
Books are but formal dulness, tedious friends;
And sad amid the social band he sits,
Lonely and unattentive. From the tongue
The unfinish'd period falls: while, borne away,
On swelling thought, his wafted spirit flies
To the vain bosom of his distant fair;
And leaves the semblance of a lover, fix'd
In melancholy site, with head declin'd,
And love-dejected eyes. Sudden he starts,
Shook from his tender trance, and restless runs
To glimmering shades and sympathetic glooms,
Where the dun umbrage o'er the falling stream,

Romantic, hangs; there through the pensive dusk
Strays, in heart-thrilling meditation lost,
Indulging all to love: or on the bank
Thrown, amid drooping lilies, swells the breeze
With sighs unceasing, and the brook with tears.
Thus in soft anguish he consumes the day;
Nor quits his deep retirement, till the moon
Peeps through the chambers of the fleecy east,
Enlighten'd by degrees, and in her train
Leads on the gentle hours; then forth he walks,
Beneath the trembling languish of her beam,
With soften'd soul, and woos the bird of eve
To mingle woes with his; or, while the world
And all the sons of care lie hush'd in sleep,
Associates with the midnight shadows drear;
And, sighing to the lonely taper, pours
His idly tortur'd heart into the page
Meant for the moving messenger of love—
Where rapture burns on rapture, every line
With rising frenzy fir'd. But if on bed
Delirious flung, sleep from his pillow flies.
All night he tosses, nor the balmy power

In any posture finds; till the gray morn
Lifts her pale lustre on the paler wretch,
Exanimate by love: and then perhaps
Exhausted nature sinks awhile to rest,
Still interrupted by distracted dreams,
That o'er the sick imagination rise
And in black colours paint the mimic scene.
Oft with the enchantress of his soul he talks;
Sometimes in crowds distress'd; or if retir'd
To secret-winding flower-enwoven bowers,
Far from the dull impertinence of man,
Just as he, credulous, his endless cares
Begins to lose in blind oblivious love,
Snatch'd from her yielded hand, he knows not how,
Through forests huge, and long untravell'd heaths
With desolation brown, he wanders waste,
In night and tempest wrapt; or shrinks, aghast,
Back from the bending precipice; or wades
The turbid stream below, and strives to reach
The farther shore, where succourless and sad
She with extended arms his aid implores,
But strives in vain: borne by the outrageous flood

To distance down, he rides the ridgy wave,
Or whelm'd beneath the boiling eddy sinks.
These are the charming agonies of love,
Whose misery delights. But through the heart
Should jealousy its venom once diffuse,
'Tis then delightful misery no more,
But agony unmix'd, incessant gall,
Corroding every thought, and blasting all
Love's paradise. Ye fairy prospects, then,
Ye beds of roses, and ye bowers of joy,
Farewell! Ye gleamings of departed peace,
Shine out your last! the yellow-tinging plague
Internal vision taints, and in a night
Of livid gloom imagination wraps.
Ah! then, instead of love-enliven'd cheeks,
Of sunny features, and of ardent eyes
With flowing rapture bright, dark looks succeed,
Suffus'd and glaring with untender fire;
A clouded aspect, and a burning cheek,
Where the whole poison'd soul malignant sits,
And frightens love away. Ten thousand fears
Invented wild, ten thousand frantic views

Of horrid rivals, hanging on the charms
For which he melts in fondness, eat him up
With fervent anguish, and consuming rage.
In vain reproaches lend their idle aid,
Deceitful pride, and resolution frail,
Giving false peace a moment. Fancy pours,
Afresh, her beauties on his busy thought;
Her first endearments, twining round the soul
With all the witchcraft of ensnaring love.
Straight the fierce storm involves his mind anew;
Flames through the nerves, and boils along the veins;
While anxious doubt distracts the tortur'd heart:
For even the sad assurance of his fears
Were peace to what he feels. Thus the warm youth,
Whom love deludes into his thorny wilds,
Through flowery-tempting paths, or leads a life
Of fever'd rapture, or of cruel care;
His brightest aims extinguish'd all, and all
His lively moments running down to waste.

But happy they! the happiest of their kind!
Whom gentler stars unite, and in one fate
Their hearts, their fortunes, and their beings blend

'Tis not the coarser tie of human laws,
Unnatural oft, and foreign to the mind,
That binds their peace, but harmony itself,
Attuning all their passions into love;
Where friendship full-exerts her softest power,
Perfect esteem enliven'd by desire
Ineffable, and sympathy of soul;
Thought meeting thought, and will preventing will,
With boundless confidence: for nought but love
Can answer love, and render bliss secure.
Let him, ungenerous, who, alone intent
To bless himself, from sordid parents buys
The loathing virgin, in eternal care,
Well-merited, consume his nights and days;
Let barbarous nations, whose inhuman love
Is wild desire, fierce as the suns they feel;
Let eastern tyrants, from the light of heaven
Seclude their bosom-slaves, meanly possess'd
Of a mere lifeless, violated form:
While those whom love cements in holy faith,
And equal transport, free as Nature live,
Disdaining fear. What is the world to them,

Its pomp, its pleasure, and its nonsense all!
Who in each other clasp whatever fair
High fancy forms, and lavish hearts can wish;
Something than beauty dearer, should they look
Or on the mind, or mind-illumin'd face—
Truth, goodness, honour, harmony, and love,
The richest bounty of indulgent Heaven.
Meantime a smiling offspring rises round,
And mingles both their graces. By degrees,
The human blossom blows; and every day,
Soft as it rolls along, shows some new charm,
The father's lustre and the mother's bloom.
Then infant reason grows apace, and calls
For the kind hand of an assiduous care.
Delightful task! to rear the tender thought,
To teach the young idea how to shoot,
To pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind,
To breathe the enlivening spirit, and to fix
The generous purpose in the glowing breast.
Oh speak the joy! ye whom the sudden tear
Surprises often, while you look around,
And nothing strikes your eye but sights of bliss,

All various nature pressing on the heart;
An elegant sufficiency, content,
Retirement, rural quiet, friendship, books,
Ease and alternate labour, useful life,
Progressive virtue, and approving Heaven.
These are the matchless joys of virtuous love;
And thus their moments fly. The Seasons thus,
As ceaseless round a jarring world they roll,
Still find them happy; and consenting Spring
Sheds her own rosy garland on their heads:
Till evening comes at last, serene and mild;
When after the long vernal day of life,
Enamour'd more, as more remembrance swells
With many a proof of recollected love,
Together down they sink in social sleep;
Together freed, their gentle spirits fly
To scenes where love and bliss immortal reign.

Summer.

THE ARGUMENT.

The subject proposed. Invocation. Address to Mr. Dodington. An introductory reflection on the motion of the heavenly bodies; whence the succession of the Seasons. As the face of nature in this season is almost uniform, the progress of the poem is a description of a Summer's day. The dawn. Sunrising. Hymn to the sun. Forenoon. Summer insects described. Hay-making. Sheep-shearing. Noonday. A woodland retreat. Group of herds and flocks. A solemn grove: how it affects a contemplative mind. A cataract, and rude scene. View of Summer in the torrid zone. Storm of thunder and lightning. A tale. The storm over, a serene afternoon. Bathing. Hour of walking. Transition to the prospect of a rich well cultivated country: which introduces a panegyric on Great Britain. Sun set. Evening. Night. Summer meteors. A comet. The whole concluding with the praise of philosophy.

SUMMER.

FROM brightening fields of ether fair-disclos'd,
Child of the sun, refulgent SUMMER comes,
In pride of youth, and felt through nature's depth:
He comes attended by the sultry hours,
And ever-fanning breezes, on his way;
While, from his ardent look, the turning Spring
Averts her blushful face; and earth, and skies,
All-smiling, to his hot dominion leaves.

Hence, let me haste into the mid-wood shade,
Where scarce a sunbeam wanders through the gloom;
And on the dark-green grass, beside the brink
Of haunted stream, that by the roots of oak
Rolls o'er the rocky channel, lie at large,
And sing the glories of the circling year.

Come, inspiration! from thy hermit-seat,
By mortal seldom found: may fancy dare,
From thy fix'd serious eye, and raptur'd glance
Shot on surrounding heaven, to steal one look
Creative of the poet, every power
Exalting to an ecstasy of soul.
And thou, my youthful muse's early friend,
In whom the human graces all unite;
Pure light of mind, and tenderness of heart;
Genius and wisdom; the gay social sense,
By decency chastis'd; goodness and wit,
In seldom-meeting harmony combin'd;
Unblemish'd honour, and an active zeal
For Britain's glory, liberty, and man:
O Dodington! attend my rural song,
Stoop to my theme, inspirit every line,
And teach me to deserve thy just applause.

With what an awful world-revolving power
Where first the unwieldy planets launch'd along
The illimitable void! thus to remain,
Amid the flux of many thousand years,
That oft has swept the toiling race of men

And all their labour'd monuments away,
Firm, unremitting, matchless, in their course;
To the kind-temper'd change of night and day,
And of the Seasons ever stealing round,
Minutely faithful: such the All-perfect Hand
That pois'd, impels, and rules the steady whole.

When now no more the alternate Twins are fir'd,
And Cancer reddens with the solar blaze,
Short is the doubtful empire of the night;
And soon, observant of approaching day,
The meek-ey'd morn appears, mother of dews,
At first faint-gleaming in the dappled east—
Till far o'er ether spreads the widening glow,
And, from before the lustre of her face,
White break the clouds away. With quicken'd step,
Brown night retires. Young day pours in apace,
And opens all the lawny prospect wide.
The dripping rock, the mountain's misty top,
Swell on the sight, and brighten with the dawn.
Blue, through the dusk, the smoking currents shine;
And from the bladed field the fearful hare
Limps, awkward; while along the forest glade

The wild deer trip, and often turning gaze
At early passenger. Music awakes,
The native voice of undissembled joy;
And thick around the woodland hymns arise.
Rous'd by the cock, the soon-clad shepherd leaves
His mossy cottage, where with peace he dwells;
And from the crowded fold, in order, drives
His flock, to taste the verdure of the morn.

Falsely luxurious, will not man awake;
And, springing from the bed of sloth, enjoy
The cool, the fragrant, and the silent hour,
To meditation due, and sacred song?
For is there aught in sleep can charm the wise?
To lie in dead oblivion, losing half
The fleeting moments of too short a life;
Total extinction of the enlighten'd soul!
Or else to feverish vanity alive,
Wilder'd, and tossing through distemper'd dreams!
Who would in such a gloomy state remain
Longer than nature craves; when every muse
And every blooming pleasure wait without,
To bless the wildly devious morning-walk?

But yonder comes the powerful king of day
Rejoicing in the east. The lessening cloud,
The kindling azure, and the mountain's brow
Illum'd with fluid gold, his near approach
Betoken glad. Lo! now apparent all,
Aslant the dew-bright earth, and colour'd air,
He looks in boundless majesty abroad;
And sheds the shining day, that burnish'd plays
On rocks, and hills, and towers, and wandering streams,
High-gleaming from afar. Prime cheerer, light!
Of all material beings first, and best!
Efflux divine! Nature's resplendent robe!
Without whose vesting beauty all were wrapt
In unessential gloom; and thou, O sun!
Soul of surrounding worlds! in whom best seen
Shines out thy Maker! may I sing of thee?

'Tis by thy secret, strong, attractive force,
As with a chain indissoluble bound,
Thy system rolls entire; from the far bourn
Of utmost Saturn, wheeling wide his round
Of thirty years, to Mercury, whose disk
Can scarce be caught by philosophic eye,

Lost in the near effulgence of thy blaze.
Informer of the planetary train!
Without whose quickening glance their cumbrous orbs
Were brute unlovely mass, inert and dead,
And not, as now, the green abodes of life—
How many forms of being wait on thee!
Inhaling spirit; from the unfetter'd mind,
By thee sublim'd, down to the daily race,
The mixing myriads of thy setting beam.
The vegetable world is also thine,
Parent of Seasons! who the pomp precede
That waits thy throne, as through thy vast domain,
Annual, along the bright ecliptic road,
In world-rejoicing state, it moves sublime.
Meantime the expecting nations, circled gay
With all the various tribes of foodful earth,
Implore thy bounty, or send grateful up
A common hymn; while, round thy beaming car,
High-seen, the Seasons lead, in sprightly dance
Harmonious knit, the rosy-finger'd hours,
The zephyrs floating loose, the timely rains,
Of bloom ethereal the light-footed dews,

And soften'd into joy the surly storms.
These, in successive turn, with lavish hand,
Shower every beauty, every fragrance shower,
Herbs, flowers, and fruits; till, kindling at thy touch,
From land to land is flush'd the vernal year.

Nor to the surface of enliven'd earth,
Graceful with hills and dales, and leafy woods,
Her liberal tresses, is thy force confin'd—
But, to the bowell'd cavern darting deep,
The mineral kinds confess thy mighty power.
Effulgent, hence the veiny marble shines;
Hence labour draws his tools; hence burnish'd war
Gleams on the day; the nobler works of peace
Hence bless mankind; and generous commerce binds
The round of nations in a golden chain.

The unfruitful rock itself, impregn'd by thee,
In dark retirement forms the lucid stone.
The lively diamond drinks thy purest rays,
Collected light, compact; that, polish'd bright,
And all its native lustre let abroad,
Dares, as it sparkles on the fair-one's breast,
With vain ambition emulate her eyes.

At thee the ruby lights its deepening glow,
And with a waving radiance inward flames.
From thee the sapphire, solid ether, takes
Its hue cerulean; and, of evening tinct,
The purple-streaming amethyst is thine.
With thy own smile the yellow topaz burns;
Nor deeper verdure dyes the robe of Spring,
When first she gives it to the southern gale,
Than the green emerald shows. But, all combin'd,
Thick through the whitening opal play thy beams;
Or, flying several from its surface, form
A trembling variance of revolving hues,
As the sight varies in the gazer's hand.

The very dead creation, from thy touch,
Assumes a mimic life. By thee refin'd,
In brighter mazes the relucent stream
Plays o'er the mead. The precipice abrupt,
Projecting horror on the blacken'd flood,
Softens at thy return. The desert joys
Wildly, through all his melancholy bounds.
Rude ruins glitter; and the briny deep,
Seen from some pointed promontory's top,

Far to the blue horizon's utmost verge,
Restless, reflects a floating gleam. But this,
And all the much-transported muse can sing,
Are to thy beauty, dignity, and use,
Unequal far; great delegated source
Of light, and life, and grace, and joy below!
How shall I then attempt to sing of him,
Who, Light himself! in uncreated light
Invested deep, dwells awfully retir'd
From mortal eye, or angel's purer ken;
Whose single smile has, from the first of time,
Fill'd, overflowing, all those lamps of heaven,
That beam forever through the boundless sky:
But, should he hide his face, the astonish'd sun,
And all the extinguish'd stars, would loosening reel
Wide from their spheres, and chaos come again.
And yet was every faltering tongue of man,
Almighty Father! silent in thy praise,
Thy works themselves would raise a general voice;
Even in the depth of solitary woods,
By human foot untrod, proclaim thy power;
And to the quire celestial thee resound,

The eternal cause, support, and end of all!

To me be Nature's volume broad-display'd;
And to peruse its all-instructing page,
Or, haply catching inspiration thence,
Some easy passage, raptur'd, to translate,
My sole delight; as through the falling glooms
Pensive I stray, or with the rising dawn
On fancy's eagle-wing excursive soar.

Now, flaming up the heavens, the potent sun
Melts into limpid air the high-rais'd clouds,
And morning fogs, that hover'd round the hills
In party-colour'd bands; till wide unveil'd
The face of nature shines, from where earth seems,
Far-stretch'd around, to meet the bending sphere.

Half in a blush of clustering roses lost,
Dew-dropping coolness to the shade retires,
There, on the verdant turf or flowery bed,
By gelid founts and careless rills to muse;
While tyrant heat, dispreading through the sky,
With rapid sway, his burning influence darts
On man, and beast, and herb, and tepid stream.

Who can unpitying see the flowery race,

Shed by the morn, their new-flush'd bloom resign,
Before the parching beam? So fade the fair,
When fevers revel through their azure veins.
But one, the lofty follower of the sun,
Sad when he sets, shuts up her yellow leaves,
Drooping all night; and, when he warm returns,
Points her enamour'd bosom to his ray.

Home, from his morning task, the swain retreats;
His flock before him stepping to the fold:
While the full-udder'd mother lows around
The cheerful cottage, then expecting food,
The food of innocence and health! The daw,
The rook, and magpie, to the gray-grown oaks
(That the calm village in their verdant arms,
Sheltering, embrace) direct their lazy flight;
Where on the mingling boughs they sit embower'd,
All the hot noon, till cooler hours arise.
Faint, underneath, the household fowls convene;
And, in a corner of the buzzing shade,
The housedog, with the vacant greyhound, lies,
Out-stretch'd and sleepy. In his slumbers one
Attacks the nightly thief, and one exults

O'er hill and dale; till, waken'd by the wasp,
They starting snap. Nor shall the muse disdain
To let the little noisy summer race
Live in her lay, and flutter through her song,
Not mean though simple: to the sun allied,
From him they draw their animating fire.

Wak'd by his warmer ray, the reptile young
Come wing'd abroad; by the light air upborne,
Lighter, and full of soul. From every chink,
And secret corner, where they slept away
The wintry storms—or rising from their tombs,
To higher life—by myriads, forth at once,
Swarming they pour; of all the varied hues
Their beauty-beaming parent can disclose.
Ten thousand forms! ten thousand different tribes!
People the blaze. To sunny waters some
By fatal instinct fly; where on the pool
They, sportive, wheel; or, sailing down the stream,
Are snatch'd immediate by the quick-ey'd trout,
Or darting salmon. Through the greenwood glade
Some love to stray; there lodg'd, amus'd, and fed,
In the fresh leaf. Luxurious, others make

The meads their choice, and visit every flower,
And every latent herb: for the sweet task,
To propagate their kinds, and where to wrap,
In what soft beds, their young yet undisclos'd,
Employs their tender care. Some to the house,
The fold, and dairy, hungry, bend their flight;
Sip round the pail, or taste the curdling cheese:
Oft, inadvertent, from the milky stream
They meet their fate; or, weltering in the bowl,
With powerless wings around them wrapt, expire.

But chief to heedless flies the window proves
A constant death; where, gloomily retir'd,
The villain spider lives, cunning and fierce,
Mixture abhorr'd! Amid a mangled heap
Of carcasses, in eager watch he sits,
O'erlooking all his waving snares around.
Near the dire cell the dreadless wanderer oft
Passes; as oft the ruffian shows his front.
The prey at last ensnar'd, he dreadful darts,
With rapid glide, along the leaning line;
And, fixing in the wretch his cruel fangs,
Strikes backward, grimly pleas'd: the fluttering wing,

And shriller sound, declare extreme distress,
And ask the helping hospitable hand.

Resounds the living surface of the ground:
Nor undelightful is the ceaseless hum,
To him who muses through the woods at noon;
Or drowsy shepherd, as he lies reclin'd,
With half-shut eyes, beneath the floating shade
Of willows gray, close-crowding o'er the brook.

Gradual, from these what numerous kinds descend,
Evading even the microscopic eye!
Full nature swarms with life; one wondrous mass
Of animals, or atoms organiz'd,
Waiting the vital breath, when Parent-Heaven
Shall bid his spirit blow. The hoary fen,
In putrid steams, emits the living cloud
Of pestilence. Through subterranean cells,
Where searching sunbeams scarce can find a way,
Earth animated heaves. The flowery leaf
Wants not its soft inhabitants. Secure,
Within its winding citadel, the stone
Holds multitudes. But chief the forest boughs,
That dance unnumber'd to the playful breeze,

The downy orchard, and the melting pulp
Of mellow fruit, the nameless nations feed
Of evanescent insects. Where the pool
Stands mantled o'er with green, invisible
Amid the floating verdure millions stray.
Each liquid too, whether it pierces, soothes,
Inflames, refreshes, or exalts the taste,
With various forms abounds. Nor is the stream
Of purest crystal, nor the lucid air,
Though one transparent vacancy it seems,
Void of their unseen people. These, conceal'd
By the kind art of forming Heaven, escape
The grosser eye of man: for, if the worlds
In worlds enclos'd should on his senses burst,
From cates ambrosial, and the nectar'd bowl,
He would abhorrent turn; and in dead night,
When silence sleeps o'er all, be stunn'd with noise.

Let no presuming impious railer tax
Creative Wisdom, as if aught was form'd
In vain, or not for admirable ends.
Shall little haughty ignorance pronounce
His works unwise, of which the smallest part

Exceeds the narrow vision of her mind?
As if upon a full-proportion'd dome,
On swelling columns heav'd, the pride of art!
A critic fly, whose feeble ray scarce spreads
An inch around, with blind presumption bold,
Should dare to tax the structure of the whole.
And lives the man whose universal eye
Has swept at once the unbounded scheme of things,
Mark'd their dependence so, and firm accord,
As with unfaltering accent to conclude
That *this* availeth nought? Has any seen
The mighty chain of beings, lessening down
From Infinite Perfection to the brink
Of dreary nothing, desolate abyss!
From which astonish'd thought, recoiling, turns?
Till then, alone let zealous praise ascend,
And hymns of holy wonder, to that Power,
Whose wisdom shines as lovely on our minds,
As on our smiling eyes his servant-sun.

Thick in yon stream of light, a thousand ways,
Upward and downward, thwarting and convolv'd,
The quivering nations sport; till, tempest-wing'd,

Fierce Winter sweeps them from the face of day.
Even so luxurious men, unheeding, pass
An idle summer-life in fortune's shine,
A season's glitter! thus they flutter on
From toy to toy, from vanity to vice;
Till, blown away by death, oblivion comes
Behind, and strikes them from the book of life.

Now swarms the village o'er the jovial mead:
The rustic youth, brown with meridian toil,
Healthful and strong; full as the summer rose
Blown by prevailing suns, the ruddy maid,
Half naked, swelling on the sight, and all
Her kindled graces burning o'er her cheek.
Even stooping age is here; and infant hands
Trail the long rake, or, with the fragrant load
O'ercharg'd, amid the kind oppression roll.
Wide flies the tedded grain; all in a row
Advancing broad, or wheeling round the field,
They spread the breathing harvest to the sun,
That throws refreshful round a rural smell;
Or, as they rake the green-appearing ground,
And drive the dusky wave along the mead,

The russet haycock rises thick behind,
In order gay: while heard from dale to dale,
Waking the breeze, resounds the blended voice
Of happy labour, love, and social glee.

Or rushing thence, in one diffusive band,
They drive the troubled flocks, by many a dog
Compell'd, to where the mazy-running brook
Forms a deep pool; this bank abrupt and high,
And that, fair-spreading in a pebbled shore.
Urg'd to the giddy brink, much is the toil,
The clamour much, of men, and boys, and dogs,
Ere the soft fearful people to the flood
Commit their woolly sides. And oft the swain,
On some impatient seizing, hurls them in:
Embolden'd then, nor hesitating more,
Fast, fast, they plunge amid the flashing wave,
And painting labour to the farther shore.
Repeated this, till deep the well wash'd fleece
Has drunk the flood, and from his lively haunt
The trout is banish'd by the sordid stream,
Heavy and dripping, to the breezy brow
Slow-move the harmless race; where, as they spread

Their swelling treasures to the sunny ray,
Inly disturb'd, and wandering what this wild
Outrageous tumult means, their loud complaints
The country fill—and, toss'd from rock to rock,
Incessant bleatings run around the hills.
At last, of snowy white, the gather'd flocks
Are in the wattled pen innumerous press'd,
Head above head; and rang'd in lusty rows
The shepherds sit, and whet the sounding shears.
The housewife waits to roll her fleecy stores,
With all her gay-drest maids attending round.
One, chief, in gracious dignity enthron'd,
Shines o'er the rest, the pastoral queen, and rays
Her smiles, sweet-beaming, on her shepherd-king;
While the glad circle round them yield their souls
To festive mirth, and wit that knows no gall.
Meantime, their joyous task goes on apace:
Some mingling stir the melted tar, and some,
Deep on the new-shorn vagrant's heaving side,
To stamp his master's cipher ready stand;
Others the unwilling wether drag along;
And, glorying in his might, the sturdy boy

Holds by the twisted horns the indignant ram.
Behold where bound, and of its robe bereft,
By needy man, that all-depending lord,
How meek, how patient, the mild creature lies!
What softness in its melancholy face,
What dumb complaining innocence appears!
Fear not, ye gentle tribes, 'tis not the knife
Of horrid slaughter that is o'er you wav'd;
No, 'tis the tender swain's well-guided shears,
Who having now, to pay his annual care,
Borrow'd your fleece, to you a cumbrous load,
Will send you bounding to your hills again.

A simple scene! yet hence Britannia sees
Her solid grandeur rise: hence she commands
The exalted stores of every brighter clime,
The treasures of the sun without his rage;
Hence, fervent all, with culture, toil, and arts,
Wide glows her land; her dreadful thunder hence
Rides o'er the waves sublime, and now, even now,
Impending hangs o'er Gallia's humbled coast;
Hence rules the circling deep, and awes the world.

'Tis raging noon; and, vertical, the sun

Darts on the head direct his forceful rays.
O'er heaven and earth, far as the ranging eye
Can sweep, a dazzling deluge reigns; and all,
From pole to pole, is undistinguish'd blaze.
In vain the sight, dejected to the ground,
Stoops for relief; thence hot ascending steams
And keen reflection pain. Deep to the root
Of vegetation parch'd, the cleaving fields
And slippery lawn an arid hue disclose,
Blast fancy's blooms, and wither even the soul.
Echo no more returns the cheerful sound
Of sharpening scythe: the mower, sinking, heaps
O'er him the humid hay, with flowers perfum'd;
And scarce a chirping grasshopper is heard
Through the dumb mead. Distressful nature pants.
The very streams look languid from afar;
Or, through the unshelter'd glade, impatient, seem
To hurl into the covert of the grove.

All-conquering heat, oh intermit thy wrath!
And on my throbbing temples potent thus
Beam not so fierce! Incessant still you flow,
And still another fervent flood succeeds,

Pour'd on the head profuse. In vain I sigh,
And restless turn, and look around for night:
Night is far off; and hotter hours approach.
Thrice-happy he! who on the sunless side
Of a romantic mountain, forest-crown'd,
Beneath the whole collected shade reclines;
Or in the gelid caverns, woodbine-wrought,
And fresh bedew'd with ever-spouting streams,
Sits coolly calm, while all the world without,
Unsatisfied and sick, tosses in noon.
Emblem instructive of the virtuous man,
Who keeps his temper'd mind serene, and pure,
And every passion aptly harmoniz'd,
Amid a jarring world with vice inflam'd.

Welcome, ye shades! ye bowery thickets, hail!
Ye lofty pines! ye venerable oaks!
Ye ashes wild, resounding o'er the steep!
Delicious is your shelter to the soul,
As to the hunted hart the sallying spring,
Or stream full-flowing, that his swelling sides
Laves, as he floats along the herbag'd brink.
Cool, through the nerves, your pleasing comfort glides;

The heart beats glad; the fresh-expanded eye
And ear resume their watch; the sinews knit;
And life shoots swift through all the lighten'd limbs.
Around the adjoining brook that purls along
The vocal grove, now fretting o'er a rock,
Now scarcely moving through a reedy pool,
Now starting to a sudden stream, and now
Gently diffus'd into a limpid plain,
A various group the herds and flocks compose;
Rural confusion! On the grassy bank
Some ruminating lie; while others stand
Half in the flood, and often bending sip
The circling surface. In the middle droops
The strong laborious ox, of honest front,
Which incompos'd he shakes; and from his sides
The troublous insects lashes with his tail,
Returning still. Amid his subjects safe,
Slumbers the monarch-swain; his careless arm
Thrown round his head, on downy moss sustain'd:
Here laid his scrip, with wholesome viands fill'd;
There, listening every noise, his watchful dog.
Light fly his slumbers, if perchance a flight

Of angry gadflies fasten on the herd;
The startling scatters from the shallow brook,
In search of lavish stream. Tossing the foam,
They scorn the keeper's voice, and scour the plain
Through all the bright severity of noon;
While, from their labouring breasts, a hollow moan
Proceeding, runs low-bellowing round the hills.

Oft in this season too the horse, provok'd,
While his big sinews full of spirits swell,
Trembling with vigour, in the heat of blood,
Springs the high fence; and, o'er the field effus'd,
Darts on the gloomy flood, with steadfast eye,
And heart estrang'd to fear: his nervous chest,
Luxuriant and erect, the seat of strength!
Bears down the opposing stream; quenchless his thirst,
He takes the river at redoubled draughts;
And with wide nostrils, snorting, skims the wave.

Still let me pierce into the midnight depth
Of yonder grove, of wildest, largest growth;
That, forming high in air a woodland quire,
Nods o'er the mount beneath. At every step,
Solemn and slow, the shadows blacker fall,

And all is awful listening gloom around.

These are the haunts of meditation, these
The scenes where ancient bards the inspiring breath,
Ecstatic, felt; and, from this world retir'd,
Convers'd with angels, and immortal forms,
On gracious errands bent: to save the fall
Of virtue struggling on the brink of vice;
In waking whispers, and repeated dreams,
To hint pure thought, and warn the favour'd soul
For future trials fated to prepare;
To prompt the poet, who devoted gives
His muse to better themes; to soothe the pangs
Of dying worth, and from the patriot's breast
(Backward to mingle in detested war,
But foremost when engag'd) to turn the death;
And numberless such offices of love,
Daily and nightly, zealous to perform.

Shook sudden from the bosom of the sky,
A thousand shapes or glide athwart the dusk,
Or stalk majestic on. Deep-rous'd, I feel
A sacred terror, a severe delight,
Creep through my mortal frame; and thus, methinks,

A voice, than human more, the abstracted ear
Of fancy strikes: "Be not of us afraid,
Poor kindred man! thy fellow-creatures, we
From the same Parent-Power our beings drew—
The same our Lord, and laws, and great pursuit.
Once some of us, like thee, through stormy life
Toil'd tempest-beaten, ere we could attain
This holy calm, this harmony of mind,
Where purity and peace immingle charms.
Then fear not us; but with responsive song,
Amid these dim recesses, undisturb'd
By noisy folly and discordant vice,
Of nature sing with us, and nature's God.
Here frequent, at the visionary hour,
When musing midnight reigns or silent noon,
Angelic harps are in full concert heard,
And voices chanting from the wood-crown'd hill,
The deepening dale, or inmost sylvan glade;
A privilege bestow'd by us, alone,
On contemplation, or the hallow'd ear
Of poet, swelling to seraphic strain."

And art thou, Stanley,[1] of that sacred band?

Alas, for us too soon!—Though rais'd above
The reach of human pain, above the flight
Of human joy, yet, with a mingled ray
Of sadly pleas'd remembrance, must thou feel
A mother's love, a mother's tender woe;
Who seeks thee still in many a former scene,
Seeks thy fair form, thy lovely-beaming eyes,
Thy pleasing converse, by gay lively sense
Inspir'd—where moral wisdom mildly shone
Without the toil of art, and virtue glow'd
In all her smiles, without forbidding pride.
But, O thou best of parents! wipe thy tears;
Or rather to parental Nature pay
The tears of grateful joy—who for a while
Lent thee this younger self, this opening bloom
Of thy enlighten'd mind and gentle worth.
Believe the muse: the wintry blast of death
Kills not the buds of virtue; no, they spread,
Beneath the heavenly beams of brighter suns,
Through endless ages, into higher powers.

Thus up the mount, in airy vision rapt,
I stray, regardless whither; till the sound

Of a near fall of water every sense
Wakes from the charm of thought: swift-shrinking back,
I check my steps, and view the broken scene.

Smooth to the shelving brink a copious flood
Rolls fair, and placid; where collected all,
In one impetuous torrent, down the steep
It thundering shoots, and shakes the country round.
At first, an azure sheet, it rushes broad;
Then whitening by degrees as prone it falls,
And from the loud-resounding rocks below
Dash'd in a cloud of foam, it sends aloft
A hoary mist, and forms a ceaseless shower.
Nor can the tortur'd wave here find repose:
But, raging still amid the shaggy rocks,
Now flashes o'er the scatter'd fragments, now
Aslant the hollow'd channel rapid darts;
And falling fast from gradual slope to slope,
With wild infracted course, and lessen'd roar,
It gains a safer bed, and steals, at last,
Along the mazes of the quiet vale.

Invited from the cliff, to whose dark brow
He clings, the steep-ascending eagle soars,

With upward pinions, through the flood of day;
And, giving full his bosom to the blaze,
Gains on the sun; while all the tuneful race,
Smit by afflictive noon, disorder'd droop,
Deep in the thicket; or, from bower to bower
Responsive, force an interrupted strain.
The stockdove only through the forest coos,
Mournfully hoarse; oft ceasing from his plaint,
Short interval of weary woe! again
The sad idea of his murder'd mate,
Struck from his side by savage fowler's guile,
Across his fancy comes; and then resounds
A louder song of sorrow through the grove.

Beside the dewy border let me sit,
All in the freshness of the humid air:
There on that hollow'd rock, grotesque and wild,
An ample chair moss-lin'd, and over head
By flowering umbrage shaded; where the bee
Strays diligent, and with the extracted balm
Of fragrant woodbine loads his little thigh.

Now, while I taste the sweetness of the shade,
While nature lies around deep-lull'd in noon,

Now come, bold fancy, spread a daring flight,
And view the wonders of the torrid zone:
Climes unrelenting! with whose rage compar'd,
Yon blaze is feeble, and yon skies are cool.
    See, how at once the bright-effulgent sun,
Rising direct, swift chases from the sky
The short-liv'd twilight; and with ardent blaze
Looks gaily fierce o'er all the dazzling air:
He mounts his throne; but kind before him sends,
Issuing from out the portals of the morn,
The general breeze,[2] to mitigate his fire,
And breathe refreshment on a fainting world.
Great are the scenes, with dreadful beauty crown'd
And barbarous wealth, that see, each circling year,
Returning suns and double seasons[3] pass:
Rocks rich in gems, and mountains big with mines,
That on the high equator ridgy rise,
Whence many a bursting stream auriferous plays;
Majestic woods, of every vigorous green,
Stage above stage, high-waving o'er the hills,
Or to the far horizon wide-diffus'd,
A boundless deep immensity of shade.

Here lofty trees, to ancient song unknown,
The noble suns of potent heat and floods
Prone-rushing from the clouds, rear high to heaven
Their thorny stems, and broad around them throw
Meridian gloom. Here, in eternal prime,
Unnumber'd fruits, of keen delicious taste
And vital spirit, drink amid the cliffs,
And burning sands that bank the shrubby vales,
Redoubled day; yet in their rugged coats
A friendly juice to cool its rage contain.

Bear me, Pomona! to thy citron groves;
To where the lemon and the piercing lime,
With the deep orange, glowing through the green,
Their lighter glories blend. Lay me reclin'd
Beneath the spreading tamarind, that shakes,
Fann'd by the breeze, its fever-cooling fruit.
Deep in the night the massy locust sheds,
Quench my hot limbs; or lead me through the maze,
Embowering endless, of the Indian fig;
Or thrown at gayer ease, on some fair brow,
Let me behold, by breezy murmurs cool'd,
Broad o'er my head the verdant cedar wave,

And high palmettos lift their graceful shade.
Oh! stretch'd amid these orchards of the sun,
Give me to drain the cocoa's milky bowl,
And from the palm to draw its freshening wine;
More bounteous far than all the frantic juice
Which Bacchus pours. Nor, on its slender twigs
Low-bending, be the full pomegranate scorn'd;
Nor, creeping through the woods, the gelid race
Of berries. Oft in humble station dwells
Unboastful worth, above fastidious pomp.
Witness, thou best ananas, thou the pride
Of vegetable life, beyond whate'er
The poets imag'd in the golden age:
Quick let me strip thee of thy tufty coat,
Spread thy ambrosial stores, and feast with Jove!

From these the prospect varies. Plains immense
Lie stretch'd below, interminable meads,
And vast savannas, where the wandering eye,
Unfix'd, is in a verdant ocean lost.
Another Flora there, of bolder hues
And richer sweets, beyond our garden's pride,
Plays o'er the fields, and showers with sudden hand

Exuberant Spring; for oft these valleys shift
Their green-embroider'd robe to fiery brown,
And swift to green again, as scorching suns,
Or streaming dews and torrent rains, prevail.
Along these lonely regions, where, retir'd
From little scenes of art, great Nature dwells
In awful solitude, and nought is seen
But the wild herds that own no master's stall,
Prodigious rivers roll their fattening seas;
On whose luxuriant herbage, half-conceal'd,
Like a fall'n cedar, far diffus'd his train,
Cas'd in green scales, the crocodile extends.
The flood disparts: behold! in plaited mail,
Behemoth[4] rears his head. Glanc'd from his side,
The darted steel in idle shivers flies:
He fearless walks the plain, or seeks the hills;
Where, as he crops his varied fare, the herds,
In widening circle round, forget their food,
And at the harmless stranger wondering gaze.

Peaceful, beneath primeval trees that cast
Their ample shade o'er Niger's yellow stream,
And where the Ganges rolls his sacred wave,

Or 'mid the central depth of blackening woods
High-rais'd in solemn theatre around,
Leans the huge elephant; wisest of brutes!
Oh truly wise! with gentle might endow'd,
Though powerful, not destructive. Here he sees
Revolving ages sweep the changeful earth,
And empires rise and fall; regardless he
Of what the never-resting race of men
Project: thrice happy! could he 'scape their guile,
Who mine, from cruel avarice, his steps;
Or with his towery grandeur swell their state,
The pride of kings! or else his strength pervert,
And bid him rage amid the mortal fray,
Astonish'd at the madness of mankind.

Wide o'er the winding umbrage of the floods,
Like vivid blossoms glowing from afar,
Thick-swarm the brighter birds. For Nature's hand,
That with a sportive vanity has deck'd
The plumy nations, there her gayest hues
Profusely pours. But, if she bids them shine,
Array'd in all the beauteous beams of day,
Yet frugal still, she humbles them in song.[5]

Nor envy we the gaudy robes they lent
Proud Montezuma's realm, whose legions cast
A boundless radiance waving on the sun,
While philomel is ours; while in our shades,
Through the soft silence of the listening night,
The sober-suited songstress trills her ray.

But come, my muse, the desert-barrier burst,
A wild expanse of lifeless sand and sky;
And, swifter than the toiling caravan,
Shoot o'er the vale of Sennaar, ardent climb
The Nubian mountains, and the secret bounds
Of jealous Abyssinia boldly pierce.
Thou art no ruffian, who beneath the mask
Of social commerce com'st to rob their wealth;
No holy fury thou, blaspheming Heaven,
With consecrated steel to stab their peace,
And through the land, yet red from civil wounds,
To spread the purple tyranny of Rome.
Thou, like the harmless bee, may'st freely range,
From mead to mead bright with exalted flowers,
From jasmine grove to grove; may'st wander gay,
Through palmy shades and aromatic woods,

That grace the plains, invest the peopled hills,
And up the more than Alpine mountains wave.
There on the breezy summit, spreading fair
For many a league; or on stupendous rocks,
That from the sun-redoubling valley lift,
Cool to the middle air, their lawny tops;
Where palaces, and fanes, and villas rise;
And gardens smile around, and cultur'd fields;
And fountains gush; and careless herds and flocks
Securely stray; a world within itself,
Disdaining all assault: there let me draw
Ethereal soul, there drink reviving gales,
Profusely breathing from the spicy groves,
And vales of fragrance; there at distance hear
The roaring floods, and cataracts, that sweep
From disembowell'd earth the virgin gold;
And o'er the varied landscape, restless, rove,
Fervent with life of every fairer kind.
A land of wonders! which the sun still eyes
With ray direct, as of the lovely realm
Enamour'd, and delighting there to dwell.

How chang'd the scene! In blazing height of noon,

The sun, oppress'd, is plunged in thickest gloom.
Still horror reigns, a dreary twilight round,
Of struggling night and day malignant mix'd.
For to the hot equator crowding fast,
Where, highly rarified, the yielding air
Admits their stream, incessant vapours roll,
Amazing clouds on clouds continual heap'd;
Or whirl'd tempestuous by the gusty wind,
Or silent borne along, heavy and slow,
With the big stores of steaming oceans charg'd.
Meantime, amid these upper seas, condens'd
Around the cold aërial mountain's brow,
And by conflicting winds together dash'd,
The thunder holds his black tremendous throne;
From cloud to cloud the rending lightnings rage;
Till, in the furious elemental war
Dissolv'd, the whole precipitated mass
Unbroken floods and solid torrents pours.

The treasures these, hid from the bounded search
Of ancient knowledge; whence, with annual pomp,
Rich king of floods! o'erflows the swelling Nile.
From his two springs, in Gojam's sunny realm,

Pure-welling out, he through the lucid lake
Of fair Dembea rolls his infant stream.
There, by the naiads nurs'd, he sports away
His playful youth, amid the fragrant isles
That with unfading verdure smile around.
Ambitious, thence the manly river breaks;
And gathering many a flood, and copious fed
With all the mellow'd treasures of the sky,
Winds in progressive majesty along:
Through splendid kingdoms now devolves his maze;
Now wanders wild o'er solitary tracts
Of life-deserted sand; till, glad to quit
The joyless desert, down the Nubian rocks
From thundering steep to steep, he pours his urn,
And Egypt joys beneath the spreading wave.
His brother Niger too, and all the floods
In which the full-form'd maids of Afric lave
Their jetty limbs; and all that from the tract
Of woody mountains stretch'd through gorgeous Ind
Fall on Cor'mandel's coast, or Malabar;
From Menam's[6] orient stream, that nightly shines
With insect-lamps, to where aurora sheds

On Indus' smiling banks the rosy shower;
All, at this bounteous season, ope their urns,
And pour untoiling harvest o'er the land.
Nor less thy world, Columbus, drinks, refresh'd,
The lavish moisture of the melting year.
Wide o'er his isles, the branching Orinoque
Rolls a brown deluge; and the native drives
To dwell aloft on life-sufficing trees—
At once his dome, his robe, his food, and arms.
Swell'd by a thousand streams, impetuous hurl'd
From all the roaring Andes, huge descends
The mighty Orellana.[7] Scarce the muse
Dares stretch her wing o'er this enormous mass
Of rushing water; scarce she dares attempt
The sea-like Plata; to whose dread expanse,
Continuous depth, and wondrous length of course,
Our floods are rills. With unabated force,
In silent dignity they sweep along;
And traverse realms unknown, and blooming wilds,
And fruitful deserts—worlds of solitude,
Where the sun smiles and Seasons teem in vain,
Unseen and unenjoy'd. Forsaking these,

O'er peopled plains they fair-diffusive flow,
And many a nation feed, and circle safe,
In their soft bosom, many a happy isle;
The seat of blameless Pan, yet undisturb'd
By Christian crimes and Europe's cruel sons.
Thus pouring on they proudly seek the deep,
Whose vanquish'd tide, recoiling from the shock,
Yields to this liquid weight of half the globe;
And ocean trembles for his green domain.'

But what avails this wondrous waste of wealth,
This gay profusion of luxurious bliss,
This pomp of Nature? what their balmy meads,
Their powerful herbs, and Ceres void of pain?
By vagrant birds dispers'd, and wafting winds,
What their unplanted fruits? what the cool draughts,
The ambrosial food, rich gums, and spicy health,
Their forests yield? their toiling insects what,
Their silky pride, and vegetable robes?
Ah! what avail their fatal treasures, hid
Deep in the bowels of the pitying earth,
Golconda's gems, and sad Potosi's mines?
Where dwelt the gentlest children of the sun!

What all that Afric's golden rivers roll,
Her odorous woods, and shining ivory stores?
Ill-fated race! the softening arts of peace,
Whate'er the humanizing muses teach;
The godlike wisdom of the temper'd breast;
Progressive truth, the patient force of thought;
Investigation calm, whose silent powers
Command the world; the light that leads to heaven;
Kind equal rule, the government of laws,
And all-protecting freedom, which alone
Sustains the name and dignity of man:
These are not theirs. The parent sun himself
Seems o'er this world of slaves to tyrannize;
And, with oppressive ray, the roseate bloom
Of beauty blasting, gives the gloomy hue,
And feature gross; or worse, to ruthless deeds,
Mad jealousy, blind rage, and fell revenge,
Their fervid spirit fires. Love dwells not there;
The soft regards, the tenderness of life,
The heart-shed tear, the ineffable delight
Of sweet humanity: these court the beam
Of milder climes; in selfish fierce desire,

And the wild fury of voluptuous sense,
There lost. The very brute creation there
This rage partakes, and burns with horrid fire.
Lo! the green serpent, from his dark abode,
Which even imagination fears to tread,
At noon forth-issuing, gathers up his train
In orbs immense, then, darting out anew,
Seeks the refreshing fount, by which diffus'd
He throws his folds; and while, with threatening tongue
And deathful jaws erect, the monster curls
His flaming crest, all other thirst appall'd,
Or shivering flies, or check'd at distance stands,
Nor dares approach. But still more direful he,
The small close-lurking minister of fate,
Whose high-concocted venom through the veins
A rapid lightning darts, arresting swift
The vital current. Form'd to humble man,
This child of vengeful Nature! There, sublim'd
To fearless lust of blood, the savage race
Roam, licens'd by the shading hour of guilt,
And foul misdeed, when the pure day has shut
His sacred eye. The tiger, darting fierce,

Impetuous on the prey his glance has doom'd;
The lively-shining leopard, speckled o'er
With many a spot, the beauty of the waste;
And, scorning all the taming arts of man,
The keen hyena, fellest of the fell:
These, rushing from the inhospitable woods
Of Mauritania, or the tufted isles
That verdant rise amid the Libyan wild,
Innumerous glare around their shaggy king,
Majestic, stalking o'er the printed sand;
And, with imperious and repeated roars,
Demand their fated food. The fearful flocks
Crowd near the guardian swain; the nobler herds,
Where round their lordly bull, in rural ease,
They ruminating lie, with horror hear
The coming rage. The awaken'd village starts;
And to her fluttering breast the mother strains
Her thoughtless infant. From the pirate's den,
Or stern Morocco's tyrant fang, escap'd,
The wretch half-wishes for his bonds again:
While, uproar all, the wilderness resounds,
From Atlas eastward to the frighted Nile.

Unhappy he! who from the first of joys,
Society, cut off, is left alone
Amid this world of death. Day after day,
Sad on the jutting eminence he sits,
And views the main that ever toils below:
Still fondly forming in the farthest verge,
Where the round ether mixes with the wave,
Ships, dim-discovered, dropping from the clouds.
At evening to the setting sun he turns
A mournful eye, and down his dying heart
Sinks helpless; while the wonted roar is up,
And hiss continual through the tedious night.
Yet here, even here, into these black abodes
Of monsters, unappall'd, from stooping Rome,
And guilty Cæsar, liberty retir'd,
Her Cato following through Numidian wilds;
Disdainful of Campania's gentle plains,
And all the green delights Ausonia pours—
When for them she must bend the servile knee,
And fawning take the splendid robber's boon.

Nor stop the terrors of these regions here.
Commission'd demons oft, angels of wrath,

Let loose the raging elements. Breath'd hot
From all the boundless furnace of the sky,
And the wide glittering waste of burning sand,
A suffocating wind the pilgrim smites
With instant death. Patient of thirst and toil,
Son of the desert! even the camel feels,
Shot through his wither'd heart, the fiery blast.
Or from the black-red ether, bursting broad,
Sallies the sudden whirlwind. Straight the sands,
Commov'd around, in gathering eddies play;
Nearer and nearer still they darkening come;
Till, with the general all-involving storm
Swept up, the whole continuous wilds arise;
And by their noon day fount dejected thrown,
Or sunk at night in sad disastrous sleep,
Beneath descending hills, the caravan
Is buried deep. In Cairo's crowded streets
The impatient merchant, wondering, waits in vain,
And Mecca saddens at the long delay.

But chief at sea, whose every flexile wave
Obeys the blast, the aërial tumult swells.
In the dread ocean, undulating wide,

Beneath the radiant line that girts the globe,
The circling typhon[8] whirl'd from point to point,
Exhausting all the rage of all the sky,
And dire ecnephias,[8] reign. Amid the heavens,
Falsely serene, deep in a cloudy speck[9]
Compress'd, the mighty tempest brooding dwells:
Of no regard save to the skilful eye,
Fiery and foul, the small prognostic hangs
Aloft, or on the promontory's brow
Musters its force. A faint deceitful calm,
A fluttering gale, the demon sends before,
To tempt the spreading sail. Then down at once,
Precipitant, descends a mingled mass
Of roaring winds, and flame, and rushing floods.
In wild amazement fix'd the sailor stands.
Art is too slow. By rapid fate oppress'd,
His broad-wing'd vessel drinks the whelming tide,
Hid in the bosom of the black abyss.
With such mad seas the daring Gama[10] fought,
For many a day, and many a dreadful night,
Incessant, labouring round the *stormy cape;*
By bold ambition led, and bolder thirst

Of gold. For then, from ancient gloom emerg'd
The rising world of trade; the genius, then,
Of navigation, that in hopeless sloth
Had slumber'd on the vast Atlantic deep
For idle ages, starting, heard at last
The Lusitanian prince;[11] who, heaven-inspir'd,
To love of useful glory rous'd mankind,
And in unbounded commerce mix'd the world.

Increasing still the terrors of these storms,
His jaws horrific arm'd with threefold fate,
Here dwells the direful shark. Lur'd by the scent
Of steaming crowds, of rank disease, and death,
Behold! he rushing cuts the briny flood,
Swift as the gale can bear the ship along;
And from the partners of that cruel trade
Which spoils unhappy Guinea of her sons,
Demands his share of prey—demands themselves.
The stormy fates descend: one death involves
Tyrants and slaves; when straight, their mangled limbs
Crashing at once, he dyes the purple seas
With gore, and riots in the vengeful meal.

When o'er this world, by equinoctial rains

Flooded immense, looks out the joyless sun,
And draws the copious steam; from swampy fens,
Where putrefaction into life ferments,
And breathes destructive myriads; or from woods,
Impenetrable shades, recesses foul,
In vapours rank and blue corruption wrapt,
Whose gloomy horrors yet no desperate foot
Has ever dar'd to pierce—then, wasteful, forth
Walks the dire power of pestilent disease.
A thousand hideous fiends her course attend,
Sick nature blasting, and to heartless woe,
And feeble desolation, casting down
The towering hopes and all the pride of man.
Such as, of late, at Cartagena quench'd
The British fire. You, gallant Vernon, saw
The miserable scene; you, pitying, saw
To infant weakness sunk the warrior's arm;
Saw the deep-racking pang, the ghastly form,
The lip pale-quivering, and the beamless eye
No more with ardour bright; you heard the groans
Of agonizing ships, from shore to shore;
Heard, nightly plung'd amid the sullen waves,

The frequent corse—while on each other fix'd,
In sad presage, the blank assistants seem'd,
Silent, to ask, whom fate would next demand.

What need I mention those inclement skies
Where, frequent o'er the sickening city, plague,
The fiercest child of Nemesis divine,
Descends? From Ethiopia's poison'd woods,
From stifled Cairo's filth, and fetid fields
With locust-armies putrefying heap'd,
This great destroyer sprung.[12] Her awful rage
The brutes escape. Man is her destin'd prey,
Intemperate man! and o'er his guilty domes
She draws a close incumbent cloud of death;
Uninterrupted by the living winds,
Forbid to blow a wholesome breeze; and stain'd
With many a mixture by the sun, suffus'd,
Of angry aspect. Princely wisdom, then,
Dejects his watchful eye; and from the hand
Of feeble justice, ineffectual, drop
The sword and balance: mute the voice of joy,
And hush'd the clamour of the busy world.
Empty the streets, with uncouth verdure clad;

Into the worst of deserts sudden turn'd
The cheerful haunt of men—unless escap'd
From the doom'd house, where matchless horror reigns,
Shut up by barbarous fear, the smitten wretch,
With frenzy wild, breaks loose, and loud to Heaven
Screaming, the dreadful policy arraigns,
Inhuman and unwise. The sullen door,
Yet uninfected, on its cautious hinge
Fearing to turn, abhors society.
Dependants, friends, relations, love himself,
Savag'd by woe, forget the tender tie,
The sweet engagement of the feeling heart.
But vain their selfish care: the circling sky
The wide enlivening air is full of fate;
And, struck by turns, in solitary pangs
They fall, unblest, untended, and unmourn'd.
Thus o'er the prostrate city black despair
Extends her raven wing; while, to complete
The scene of desolation, stretch'd around,
The grim guards stand, denying all retreat,
And give the flying wretch a better death.

Much yet remains unsung: the rage intense

Of brazen-vaulted skies, of iron fields,
Where drought and famine starve the blasted year;
Fir'd by the torch of noon to tenfold rage,
The infuriate hill, that shoots the pillar'd flame;
And, rous'd within the subterranean world,
The expanding earthquake, that resistless shakes
Aspiring cities from their solid base,
And buries mountains in the flaming gulf.
But 'tis enough; return, my vagrant muse;
A nearer scene of horror calls thee home.

Behold, slow-settling o'er the lurid grove,
Unusual darkness broods; and growing gains
The full possession of the sky, surcharg'd
With wrathful vapour, from the secret beds,
Where sleep the mineral generations, drawn.
Thence nitre, sulphur, and the fiery spume
Of fat bitumen, steaming on the day,
With various-tinctur'd trains of latent flame,
Pollute the sky, and in yon baleful cloud,
A reddening gloom, a magazine of fate,
Ferment; till, by the touch ethereal rous'd,
The dash of clouds, or irritating war

Of fighting winds, while all is calm below,
They furious spring. A boding silence reigns,
Dread through the dun expanse; save the dull sound
That from the mountain, previous to the storm,
Rolls o'er the muttering earth, disturbs the flood,
And shakes the forest leaf without a breath:
Prone, to the lowest vale, the aërial tribes
Descend: the tempest-loving raven scarce
Dares wing the dubious dusk. In rueful gaze
The cattle stand, and on the scowling heavens
Cast a deploring eye; by man forsook,
Who to the crowded cottage hies him fast,
Or seeks the shelter of the downward cave.

'Tis listening fear, and dumb amazement all:
When to the startled eye the sudden glance
Appears far south, eruptive through the cloud;
And following slower, in explosion vast,
The thunder raises his tremendous voice.
At first, heard solemn o'er the verge of heaven,
The tempest growls; but as it nearer comes,
And rolls its awful burden on the wind,
The lightnings flash a larger curve, and more

The noise astounds—till over head a sheet
Of livid flame discloses wide, then shuts
And opens wider, shuts and opens still
Expansive, wrapping ether in a blaze.
Follows the loosen'd aggravated roar,
Enlarging, deepening, mingling, peal on peal
Crush'd horrible, convulsing heaven and earth.
Down comes a deluge of sonorous hail,
Or prone-descending rain. Wide-rent, the clouds
Pour a whole flood; and yet, its flame unquench'd,
The unconquerable lightning struggles through,
Ragged and fierce, or in red whirling balls,
And fires the mountains with redoubled rage.
Black from the stroke, above, the smouldering pine
Stands a sad shatter'd trunk; and, stretch'd below,
A lifeless group the blasted cattle lie:
Here the soft flocks, with that same harmless look
They wore alive, and ruminating still
In fancy's eye; and there the frowning bull,
And ox half-rais'd. Struck on the castled cliff,
The venerable tower and spiry fane
Resign their aged pride. The gloomy woods

Start at the flash, and from their deep recess,
Wide-flaming out, their trembling inmates shake
Amid Caernarvon's mountains rages loud
The repercussive roar; with mighty crush
Into the flashing deep, from the rude rocks
Of Penmaen Mawr heap'd hideous to the sky,
Tumble the smitten cliffs; and Snowdon's peak,
Dissolving, instant yields his wintry load.
Far-seen, the heights of heathy Cheviot blaze,
And Thulè bellows through her utmost isles.

Guilt hears appall'd, with deeply troubled thought;
And yet not always on the guilty head
Descends the fated flash. Young Celadon
And his Amelia were a matchless pair;
With equal virtue form'd, and equal grace,
The same, distinguish'd by their sex alone:
Hers the mild lustre of the blooming morn,
And his the radiance of the risen day.

They lov'd: but such their guileless passion was,
As in the dawn of time inform'd the heart
Of innocence, and undissembling truth.
'Twas friendship heighten'd by the mutual wish,

The enchanting hope, and sympathetic glow,
Beam'd from the mutual eye. Devoting all
To love, each was to each a dearer self;
Supremely happy in the awaken'd power
Of giving joy. Alone, amid the shades,
Still in harmonious intercourse they liv'd
The rural day, and talk'd the flowing heart,
Or sigh'd and look'd unutterable things.

So pass'd their life, a clear united stream,
By care unruffled; till, in evil hour,
The tempest caught them on the tender walk,
Heedless how far, and where its mazes stray'd,
While, with each other blest, creative love
Still bade eternal Eden smile around.
Heavy with instant fate, her bosom heav'd
Unwonted sighs, and stealing oft a look
Of the big gloom, on Celadon her eye
Fell tearful, wetting her disorder'd cheek.
In vain assuring love, and confidence
In Heaven, repress'd her fear! it grew, and shook
Her frame near dissolution. He perceiv'd
The unequal conflict; and, as angels look

On dying saints, his eyes compassion shed,
With love illumin'd high. "Fear not," he said,
"Sweet innocence! thou stranger to offence,
And inward storm! He who yon skies involves
In frowns of darkness, ever smiles on thee
With kind regard. O'er thee the secret shaft
That wastes at midnight, or the undreaded hour
Of noon, flies harmless; and that very voice
Which thunders terror through the guilty heart,
With tongues of seraphs whispers peace to thine.
'Tis safety to be near thee sure, and thus
To clasp perfection!" From his void embrace,
Mysterious Heaven! that moment, to the ground,
A blacken'd corse, was struck the beauteous maid.
But who can paint the lover, as he stood,
Pierc'd by severe amazement, hating life,
Speechless, and fix'd in all the death of woe!
So, faint resemblance, on the marble tomb
The well-dissembled mourner stooping stands,
For ever silent, and for ever sad.

As from the face of heaven the shatter'd clouds
Tumultuous rove, the interminable sky

Sublimer swells, and o'er the world expands
A purer azure. Nature, from the storm,
Shines out afresh; and through the lighten'd air
A higher lustre and a clearer calm,
Diffusive, tremble; while, as if in sign
Of danger past, a glittering robe of joy,
Set off abundant by the yellow ray,
Invests the fields, yet dropping from distress.

'Tis beauty all, and grateful song around,
Join'd to the low of kine, and numerous bleat
Of flocks thick-nibbling through the clover'd vale.
And shall the hymn be marr'd by thankless man,
Most-favour'd; who with voice articulate
Should lead the chorus of this lower world?
Shall he, so soon forgetful of the hand
That hush'd the thunder, and serenes the sky,
Extinguish'd feel that spark the tempest wak'd,
That sense of powers exceeding far his own,
Ere yet his feeble heart has lost its fears?

Cheer'd by the milder beam, the sprightly youth
Speeds to the well-known pool, whose crystal depth
A sandy bottom shows. A while he stands

Gazing the inverted landscape, half-afraid
To meditate the blue profound below;
Then plunges headlong down the circling flood.
His ebon tresses and his rosy cheek
Instant emerge; and through the obedient wave,
At each short breathing by his lip repell'd,
With arms and legs according well, he makes,
As humour leads, an easy-winding path;
While, from his polish'd sides, a dewy light
Effuses on the pleas'd spectators round.

This is the purest exercise of health,
The kind refresher of the summer heats;
Nôr, when cold Winter keens the brightening flood,
Would I weak-shivering linger on the brink.
Thus life redoubles; and is oft preserv'd,
By the bold swimmer, in the swift illapse
Of accident disastrous. Hence the limbs
Knit into force; and the same Roman arm
That rose victorious o'er the conquer'd earth,
First learn'd, while tender, to subdue the wave.
Even, from the body's purity, the mind
Receives a secret sympathetic aid.

Close in the covert of an hazel copse,
Where winded into pleasing solitudes
Runs out the rambling dale, young Damon sat;
Pensive, and pierc'd with love's delightful pangs.
There to the stream that down the distant rocks
Hoarse-murmuring fell, and plaintive breeze that play'd
Among the bending willows, falsely he
Of Musidora's cruelty complain'd.
She felt his flame; but deep within her breast,
In bashful coyness, or in maiden pride,
The soft return conceal'd—save when it stole
In sidelong glances from her downcast eye,
Or from her swelling soul in stifled sighs.
Touch'd by the scene, no stranger to his vows,
He fram'd a melting lay, to try her heart;
And, if an infant passion struggled there,
To call that passion forth. Thrice-happy swain!
A lucky chance, that oft decides the fate
Of mighty monarchs, then decided thine.
For, lo! conducted by the laughing loves,
This cool retreat his Musidora sought:
Warm in her cheek the sultry season glow'd;

And, rob'd in loose array, she came to bathe
Her fervent limbs in the refreshing stream.
What shall he do? In sweet confusion lost,
And dubious flutterings, he a while remain'd.
A pure ingenuous elegance of soul,
A delicate refinement known to few,
Perplex'd his breast, and urg'd him to retire;
But love forbade. Ye prudes in virtue, say,
Say, ye severest, what would you have done?
Meantime, this fairer nymph than ever blest
Arcadian stream, with timid eye around
The banks surveying, stripp'd her beauteous limbs,
To taste the lucid coolness of the flood.
Ah! then, not Paris on the piny top
Of Ida panted stronger, when aside
The rival goddesses the veil divine
Cast unconfin'd, and gave him all their charms,
Than, Damon, thou; as from the snowy leg,
And slender foot, the inverted silk she drew;
As the soft touch dissolv'd the virgin zone;
And, through the parting robe, the alternate breast,
With youth wild-throbbing, on thy lawless gaze

In full luxuriance rose. But, desperate youth,
How durst thou risk the soul-distracting view,
As from her naked limbs, of glowing white,
Harmonious swell'd by Nature's finest hand,
In folds loose-floating fell the fainter lawn,
And fair-expos'd she stood—shrunk from herself,
With fancy blushing, at the doubtful breeze
Alarm'd, and starting like the fearful fawn?
Then to the flood she rush'd: the parted flood
Its lovely guest with closing waves receiv'd;
And every beauty softening, every grace
Flushing anew, a mellow lustre shed—
As shines the lily through the crystal mild,
Or as the rose amid the morning dew,
Fresh from Aurora's hand, more sweetly glows.
While thus she wanton'd, now beneath the wave
But ill-conceal'd, and now with streaming locks,
That half-embrac'd her in a humid veil,
Rising again, the latent Damon drew
Such maddening draughts of beauty to the soul,
As for a while o'erwhelm'd his raptur'd thought
With luxury too daring. Check'd, at last,

By love's respectful modesty, he deem'd
The theft profane, if aught profane to love
Can e'er be deem'd, and, struggling from the shade,
With headlong hurry fled; but first these lines,
Trac'd by his ready pencil, on the bank
With trembling hand he threw: "Bathe on, my fair,
Yet unbeheld save by the sacred eye
Of faithful love: I go to guard thy haunt;
To keep from thy recess each vagrant foot,
And each licentious eye." With wild surprise,
As if to marble struck, devoid of sense,
A stupid moment motionless she stood:
So stands the statue[13] that enchants the world;
So bending tries to veil the matchless boast,
The mingled beauties of exulting Greece.
Recovering, swift she flew to find those robes
Which blissful Eden knew not; and, array'd
In careless haste, the alarming paper snatch'd.
But when her Damon's well-known hand she saw,
Her terrors vanish'd, and a softer train
Of mix'd emotions, hard to be describ'd,
Her sudden bosom seiz'd: shame void of guilt,

The charming blush of innocence, esteem
And admiration of her lover's flame,
By modesty exalted. Even a sense
Of self-approving beauty stole across
Her busy thought. At length, a tender calm
Hush'd by degrees the tumult of her soul;
And on the spreading beech, that o'er the stream
Incumbent hung, she with the sylvan pen
Of rural lovers this confession carv'd,
Which soon her Damon kiss'd with weeping joy:
"Dear youth! sole judge of what these verses mean,
By fortune too much favour'd, but by love,
Alas! not favour'd less, be still as now
Discreet; the time may come you need not fly."

The sun has lost his rage: his downward orb
Shoots nothing now but animating warmth,
And vital lustre; that, with various ray,
Lights up the clouds, those beauteous robes of heaven,
Incessant roll'd into romantic shapes,
The dream of waking fancy! Broad below,
Cover'd with ripening fruits, and swelling fast
Into the perfect year, the pregnant earth

And all her tribes rejoice. Now the soft hour
Of walking comes: for him who lonely loves
To seek the distant hills, and there converse
With Nature; there to harmonize his heart,
And in pathetic song to breathe around
The harmony to others. Social friends,
Attun'd to happy unison of soul—
To whose exalting eye a fairer world,
Of which the vulgar never had a glimpse,
Displays its charms—whose minds are richly fraught
With philosophic stores, superior light—
And in whose breast, enthusiastic, burns
Virtue the sons of interest deem romance,
Now call'd abroad enjoy the falling day:
Now to the verdant *portico* of woods,
To Nature's vast *lyceum*, forth they walk;
By that kind *school* where no proud master reigns,
The full free converse of the friendly heart,
Improving and improv'd. Now from the world,
Sacred to sweet retirement, lovers steal,
And pour their souls in transport, which the sire
Of love approving hears, and *calls it good.*

Which way, Amanda, shall we bend our course?
The choice perplexes. Wherefore should we choose?
All is the same with thee. Say, shall we wind
Along the streams? or walk the smiling mead?
Or court the forest glades? or wander wild
Among the waving harvests? or ascend,
While radiant Summer opens all its pride,
Thy hill, delightful Sheen?[14] Here let us sweep
The boundless landscape; now the raptur'd eye,
Exulting swift, to huge Augusta send,
Now to the sister-hills[15] that skirt her plain.
To lofty Harrow now, and now to where
Majestic Windsor lifts its princely brow.
In lovely contrast to this glorious view,
Calmly magnificent, then will we turn
To where the silver Thames first rural grows.
There let the feasted eye unwearied stray;
Luxurious, there, rove through the pendent woods
That nodding hang o'er Harrington's retreat,
And stooping thence to Ham's embowering walks,
Beneath whose shades, in spotless peace retir'd,
With her the pleasing partner of his heart,

The worthy Queensberry yet laments his Gay,
And polish'd Cornbury woos the willing muse,
Slow let us trace the matchless vale of Thames—
Fair-winding up to where the muses haunt
In Twit'nam's bowers, and for their Pope implore
The healing god, to royal Hampton's pile,
To Clermont's terrac'd height, and Esher's groves,
Where in the sweetest solitude, embrac'd
By the soft windings of the silent Mole,
From courts and senates Pelham finds repose.
Enchanting vale! beyond whate'er the muse
Has of Achaia or Hesperia sung!
O vale of bliss! O softly swelling hills!
On which the power of cultivation lies,
And joys to see the wonders of his toil.

Heavens! what a goodly prospect spreads around,
Of hills, and dales, and woods, and lawns, and spires,
And glittering towns, and gilded streams, till all
The stretching landscape into smoke decays!
Happy Britannia! where the queen of arts,
Inspiring vigour, liberty abroad
Walks, unconfin'd, even to thy farthest cots,

And scatters plenty with unsparing hand.

Rich is thy soil, and merciful thy clime;
Thy streams unfailing in the Summer's drought;
Unmatch'd thy guardian oaks; thy valleys float
With golden waves; and on thy mountains flocks
Bleat numberless—while, roving round their sides,
Bellow the blackening herds in lusty droves.
Beneath, thy meadows glow, and rise unquell'd
Against the mower's scythe. On every hand
Thy villas shine. Thy country teems with wealth;
And property assures it to the swain,
Pleas'd and unwearied in his guarded toil.

Full are thy cities with the sons of art;
And trade and joy, in every busy street,
Mingling are heard: even drudgery himself,
As at the car he sweats, or dusty hews
The palace-stone, looks gay. Thy crowded ports,
Where rising masts an endless prospect yield,
With labour burn, and echo to the shouts
Of hurried sailor, as he hearty waves
His last adieu, and, loosening every sheet,
Resigns the spreading vessel to the wind.

Bold, firm, and graceful, are thy generous youth,
By hardship sinew'd, and by danger fir'd,
Scattering the nations where they go; and first,
Or in the listed plain, or stormy seas.
Mild are thy glories too, as o'er the plans
Of thriving peace thy thoughtful sires preside;
In genius, and substantial learning, high;
For every virtue, every worth, renown'd;
Sincere, plain-hearted, hospitable, kind;
Yet like the mustering thunder when provok'd,
The dread of tyrants, and the sole resource
Of those that under grim oppression groan.

Thy sons of glory many! Alfred thine,
In whom the splendour of heroic war,
And more heroic peace, when govern'd well,
Combine; whose hallow'd name the virtues saint,
And his own muses love—the best of kings.
With him thy Edwards and thy Henries shine,
Names dear to fame; the first who deep impress'd
On haughty Gaul the terror of thy arms,
That awes her genius still. In statesmen thou,
And patriots, fertile. Thine a steady More,

Who, with a generous though mistaken zeal,
Withstood a brutal tyrant's useful rage,
Like Cato firm, like Aristides just,
Like rigid Cincinnatus nobly poor—
A dauntless soul erect, who smil'd on death.
Frugal and wise, a Walsingham is thine;
A Drake, who made thee mistress of the deep,
And bore thy name in thunder round the world.
Then flam'd thy spirit high: but who can speak
The numerous worthies of the maiden-reign?
In Ralegh mark their every glory mix'd;
Ralegh, the scourge of Spain! whose breast with all
The sage, the patriot, and the hero burn'd.
Nor sunk his vigour when a coward reign
The warrior fetter'd, and at last resign'd,
To glut the vengeance of a vanquish'd foe.
Then, active still, and unrestrain'd, his mind
Explor'd the vast extent of ages past,
And with his prison-hours enrich'd the world:
Yet found no times, in all the long research,
So glorious, or so base, as those he prov'd,
In which he conquer'd, and in which he bled.

Nor can the muse the gallant Sidney pass,
The plume of war! with early laurels crown'd,
The lover's myrtle, and the poet's bay.
A Hampden too is thine, illustrious land,
Wise, strenuous, firm, of unsubmitting soul,
Who stemm'd the torrent of a downward age
To slavery prone, and bade thee rise again,
In all thy native pomp of freedom bold.
Bright, at his call, thy age of men effulg'd;
Of men on whom late time a kindling eye
Shall turn, and tyrants tremble while they read.
Bring every sweetest flower, and let me strew
The grave where Russell lies; whose temper'd blood,
With calmest cheerfulness for thee resign'd,
Stain'd the sad annals of a giddy reign—
Aiming at lawless power, though meanly sunk
In loose inglorious luxury. With him
His friend, the British Cassius,[16] fearless bled;
Of high determin'd spirit, roughly brave,
By ancient learning to the enlighten'd love
Of ancient freedom warm'd. Fair thy renown
In awful sages and in noble bards;

Soon as the light of dawning science spread
Her orient ray, and wak'd the muses' song.
Thine is a Bacon, hapless in his choice;
Unfit to stand the civil storm of state,
And through the smooth barbarity of courts,
With firm but pliant virtue, forward still
To urge his course. Him for the studious shade
Kind Nature form'd, deep, comprehensive, clear,
Exact, and elegant; in one rich soul,
Plato, the Stagyrite, and Tully join'd.
The great deliverer he! who from the gloom
Of cloister'd monks, and jargon-teaching schools,
Led forth the true philosophy, there long
Held in the magic chain of words and forms,
And definitions void: he led her forth,
Daughter of heaven! that slow-ascending still,
Investigating sure the chain of things,
With radiant finger points to heaven again.
The generous Ashley[17] thine, the friend of man;
Who scann'd his nature with a brother's eye,
His weakness prompt to shade, to raise his aim,
To touch the finer movements of the mind,

And with the *moral beauty* charm the heart.
Why need I name thy Boyle, whose pious search,
Amid the dark recesses of his works,
The great Creator sought? And why thy Locke,
Who made the whole internal world his own?
Let Newton, pure intelligence, whom God
To mortals lent, to trace his boundless works
From laws sublimely simple, speak thy fame
In all philosophy. For lofty sense,
Creative fancy, and inspection keen
Through the deep windings of the human heart,
Is not wild Shakspere thine and Nature's boast?
Is not each great, each amiable muse
Of classic ages, in thy Milton met?
A genius universal as his theme,
Astonishing as chaos, as the bloom
Of blowing Eden fair, as heaven sublime.
Nor shall my verse that elder bard forget,
The gentle Spenser, fancy's pleasing son,
Who, like a copious river, pour'd his song
O'er all the mazes of enchanted ground;
Nor thee, his ancient master, laughing sage,

Chaucer, whose native manners-painting verse,
Well moraliz'd, shines through the Gothic cloud
Of time and language o'er thy genius thrown.

May my song soften, as thy daughters I,
Britannia, hail! for beauty is their own,
The feeling heart, simplicity of life,
And elegance, and taste; the faultless form,
Shap'd by the hand of harmony; the cheek,
Where the live crimson, through the native white
Soft-shooting, o'er the face diffuses bloom,
And every nameless grace; the parted lip,
Like the red rose-bud moist with morning dew,
Breathing delight; and, under flowing jet,
Or sunny ringlets, or of circling brown,
The neck slight-shaded, and the swelling breast;
The look resistless, piercing to the soul,
And by the soul inform'd, when drest in love
She sits high-smiling in the conscious eye.

Island of bliss! amid the subject seas
That thunder round thy rocky coasts, set up,
At once the wonder, terror, and delight,
Of distant nations; whose remotest shore

Can soon be shaken by thy naval arm;
Not to be shook thyself, but all assaults
Baffling, like thy hoar cliffs the loud sea-wave.
O Thou by whose almighty nod the scale
Of empire rises, or alternate falls,
Send forth the saving virtues round the land,
In bright patrol: white peace, and social love;
The tender-looking charity, intent
On gentle deeds, and shedding tears through smiles;
Undaunted truth, and dignity of mind;
Courage compos'd, and keen; sound temperance,
Healthful in heart and look; clear chastity,
With blushes reddening as she moves along,
Disorder'd at the deep regard she draws;
Rough industry; activity untir'd,
With copious life inform'd, and all awake;
While in the radiant front, superior shines
That first paternal virtue, public zeal—
Who throws o'er all an equal wide survey,
And, ever musing on the common weal,
Still labours glorious with some great design.
Low walks the sun, and broadens by degrees,

Just o'er the verge of day. The shifting clouds
Assembled gay, a richly gorgeous train,
In all their pomp attend his setting throne.
Air, earth, and ocean, smile immense. And now,
As if his weary chariot sought the bowers
Of Amphitritè and her tending nymphs,
(So Grecian fable sung) he dips his orb;
Now half-immers'd; and now a golden curve
Gives one bright glance, then total disappears.
For ever running an enchanted round,
Passes the day, deceitful, vain, and void;
As fleets the vision o'er the formful brain,
This moment hurrying wild the impassion'd soul,
The next in nothing lost. 'Tis so to him,
The dreamer of this earth, an idle blank:
A sight of horror to the cruel wretch
Who, all day long in sordid pleasure roll'd,
Himself an useless load, has squander'd vile,
Upon his scoundrel train, what might have cheer'd
A drooping family of modest worth.
But to the generous still-improving mind,
That gives the hopeless heart to sing for joy,

Diffusing kind beneficence around,
Boastless, as now descends the silent dew—
To him the long review of order'd life
Is inward rapture, only to be felt.

Confess'd from yonder slow-extinguish'd clouds,
All ether softening, sober evening takes
Her wonted station in the middle air;
A thousand shadows at her beck. First this
She sends on earth; then that of deeper dye
Steals soft behind; and then a deeper still
In circle following circle, gathers round,
To close the face of things. A fresher gale
Begins to wave the wood, and stir the stream,
Sweeping with shadowy gust the fields of corn;
While the quail clamours for his running mate.
Wide o'er the thistly lawn, as swells the breeze,
A whitening shower of vegetable down
Amusive floats. The kind impartial care
Of Nature nought disdains: thoughtful to feed
Her lowest sons, and clothe the coming year,
From field to field the feather'd seeds she wings.

His folded flock secure, the shepherd home

Hies, merry-hearted; and by turns relieves
The ruddy milk maid of her brimming pail;
The beauty whom perhaps his witless heart,
Unknowing what the joy-mix'd anguish means,
Sincerely loves, by that best language shown
Of cordial glances and obliging deeds.
Onward they pass, o'er many a panting height,
And valley sunk, and unfrequented; where
At fall of eve the fairy people throng,
In various game and revelry to pass
The summer night, as village stories tell.
But far about they wander from the grave
Of him, whom his ungentle fortune urg'd
Against his own sad breast to lift the hand
Of impious violence. The lonely tower
Is also shunn'd; whose mournful chambers hold,
So night-struck fancy dreams, the yelling ghost.

Among the crooked lanes, on every hedge,
The glow worm lights his gem; and, through the dark,
A moving radiance twinkles. Evening yields
The world to night; not in her winter robe
Of massy Stygian woof, but loose-array'd

In mantle dun. A faint erroneous ray,
Glanc'd from the imperfect surfaces of things,
Flings half an image on the straining eye;
While wavering woods, and villages, and streams,
And rocks, and mountain tops, that long retain'd
The ascending gleam, are all one swimming scene,
Uncertain if beheld. Sudden to heaven
Thence weary vision turns; where, leading soft
The silent hours of love, with purest ray
Sweet Venus shines; and from her genial rise
When day light sickens, till it springs afresh,
Unrivall'd reigns, the fairest lamp of night.
As thus the effulgence tremulous I drink
With cherish'd gaze, the lambent lightnings shoot
Across the sky; or horizontal dart,
In wondrous shapes—by fearful murmuring crowds
Portentous deem'd. Amid the radiant orbs
That more than deck, that animate the sky,
The life-infusing suns of other worlds,
Lo! from the dread immensity of space
Returning, with accelerated course,
The rushing comet to the sun descends;

And as he sinks below the shading earth,
With awful train projected o'er the heavens,
The guilty nations tremble. But, above
Those superstitious horrors that enslave
The fond sequacious herd, to mystic faith
And blind amazement prone, the enlighten'd few,
Whose godlike minds philosophy exalts,
The glorious stranger hail. They feel a joy
Divinely great: they in their powers exult,
That wondrous force of thought which mounting spurns
This dusky spot and measures all the sky,
While from his far excursion through the wilds
Of barren ether, faithful to his time,
They see the blazing wonder rise anew,
In seeming terror clad, but kindly bent
To work the will of all-sustaining Love;
From his huge vapoury train perhaps to shake
Reviving moisture on the numerous orbs
Through which his long ellipsis winds—perhaps
To lend new fuel to declining suns,
To light up worlds, and feed the eternal fire.

With thee, serene philosophy, with thee,

And thy bright garland, let me crown my song!
Effusive source of evidence, and truth!
A lustre shedding o'er the ennobled mind,
Stronger than summer noon; and pure as that
Whose mild vibrations soothe the parted soul,
New to the dawning of celestial day.
Hence through her nourish'd powers, enlarg'd by thee,
She springs aloft, with elevated pride,
Above the tangling mass of low desires
That bind the fluttering crowd; and, angel-wing'd,
The heights of science and of virtue gains,
Where all is calm and clear; with nature round,
Or in the starry regions, or the abyss,
To reason's and to fancy's eye display'd:
The first up-tracing, from the dreary void,
The chain of causes and effects to him,
The world-producing Essence, who alone
Possesses being; while the last receives
The whole magnificence of heaven and earth,
And every beauty, delicate or bold,
Obvious or more remote, with livelier sense,
Diffusive painted on the rapid mind.

Tutor'd by thee, hence poetry exalts
Her voice to ages; and informs the page
With music, image, sentiment, and thought,
Never to die! the treasure of mankind,
Their highest honour, and their truest joy!

Without thee, what were unenlighten'd man?
A savage roaming through the woods and wilds,
In quest of prey; and with the unfashion'd fur
Rough-clad; devoid of every finer art,
And elegance of life. Nor happiness
Domestic, mix'd of tenderness and care,
Nor moral excellence, nor social bliss,
Nor guardian law, were his; nor various skill
To turn the furrow, or to guide the tool
Mechanic; nor the heaven-conducted prow
Of navigation bold, that fearless braves
The burning line or dares the wintry pole,
Mother severe of infinite delights!
Nothing, save rapine, indolence, and guile,
And woes on woes, a still revolving train!
Whose horrid circle had made human life
Than non-existence worse: but, taught by thee,

Ours are the plans of policy and peace;
To live like brothers, and conjunctive all
Embellish life. While thus laborious crowds
Ply the tough oar, philosophy directs
The ruling helm; or, like the liberal breath
Of potent heaven, invisible, the sail
Swells out, and bears the inferior world along.
Nor to this evanescent speck of earth
Poorly confin'd—the radiant tracts on high
Are her exalted range; intent to gaze
Creation through; and, from that full complex
Of never-ending wonders, to conceive
Of the Sole Being right, who *spoke the word*,
And Nature mov'd complete. With inward view,
Thence on the ideal kingdom swift she turns
Her eye; and instant, at her powerful glance,
The obedient phantoms vanish or appear;
Compound, divide, and into order shift,
Each to his rank, from plain perception up
To the fair forms of fancy's fleeting train;
To reason then, deducing truth from truth,
And notion quite abstract; where first begins

The world of spirits, action all, and life
Unfetter'd, and unmix'd. But here the cloud,
So wills Eternal Providence, sits deep.
Enough for us to know that this dark state,
In wayward passions lost, and vain pursuits,
This infancy of being, cannot prove
The final issue of the works of God,
By boundless Love and perfect Wisdom form'd,
And ever rising with the rising mind.

Autumn.

THE ARGUMENT.

The subject proposed. Addressed to Mr. Onslow. A prospect of the fields ready for harvest. Reflections in praise of industry, raised by that view. Reaping. A tale relative to it. A harvest storm. Shooting and hunting: their barbarity. A ludicrous account of fox-hunting. A view of an orchard. Wallfruit. A vineyard. A description of fogs, frequent in the latter part of Autumn; whence a digression, inquiring into the rise of fountains and rivers. Birds of season considered, that now shift their habitation. The prodigious number of them that cover the northern and western isles of Scotland. Hence a view of the country. A prospect of the discoloured, fading woods. After a gentle dusky day, moonlight. Autumnal meteors. Morning; to which succeeds a calm, pure, sunshiny day, such as usually shuts up the season. The harvest being gathered in, the country dissolved in joy. The whole concludes with a panegyric on a philosophical country life.

AUTUMN.

CROWN'D with the sickle and the wheaten sheaf,
While AUTUMN nodding o'er the yellow plain
Comes jovial on, the Doric reed once more,
Well pleas'd, I tune. Whate'er the wintry frost
Nitrous prepar'd—the various-blossom'd Spring
Put in white promise forth—and summer suns
Concocted strong—rush boundless now to view,
Full, perfect all, and swell my glorious theme.

Onslow! the muse, ambitious of thy name,
To grace, inspire, and dignify her song,
Would from the *public voice* thy gentle ear
A while engage. Thy noble cares she knows,
The patriot virtues that distend thy thought,
Spread on thy front, and in thy bosom glow:

While listening senates hang upon thy tongue,
Devolving through the maze of eloquence
A roll of periods sweeter than her song.
But she too pants for public virtue; she,
Though weak of power yet strong in ardent will,
Whene'er her country rushes on her heart,
Assumes a bolder note, and fondly tries
To mix the patriot's with the poet's flame.

When the bright Virgin gives the beauteous days,
And Libra weighs in equal scales the year,
From heaven's high cope the fierce effulgence shook
Of parting Summer, a serener blue,
With golden light enliven'd, wide invests
The happy world. Attemper'd suns arise,
Sweet-beam'd, and shedding oft through lucid clouds
A pleasing calm; while broad, and brown, below
Extensive harvests hang the heavy head.
Rich, silent, deep, they stand; for not a gale
Rolls its light billows o'er the bending plain;
A calm of plenty! till the ruffled air
Falls from its poise, and gives the breeze to blow.
Rent is the fleecy mantle of the sky;

The clouds fly different; and the sudden sun
By fits effulgent gilds the illumin'd field,
And black by fits the shadows sweep along.
A gaily chequer'd, heart-expanding view,
Far as the circling eye can shoot around,
Unbounded tossing in a flood of corn.

These are thy blessings, industry! rough power!
Whom labour still attends, and sweat, and pain;
Yet the kind source of every gentle art,
And all the soft civility of life;
Raiser of human kind! by Nature cast,
Naked, and helpless, out amid the woods
And wilds, to rude inclement elements;
With various seeds of art deep in the mind
Implanted—and profusely pour'd around
Materials infinite; but idle all.
Still unexerted, in the unconscious breast,
Slept the lethargic powers; corruption still,
Voracious, swallow'd what the liberal hand
Of bounty scatter'd o'er the savage year;
And still the sad barbarian, roving, mix'd
With beasts of prey; or for his acorn-meal

Fought the fierce tusky boar. A shivering wretch!
Aghast and comfortless when the bleak north,
With winter charg'd, let the mix'd tempest fly,
Hail, rain, and snow, and bitter-breathing frost—
Then to the shelter of the hut he fled;
And the wild season, sordid, pin'd away.
For home he had not; home is the resort
Of love, of joy, of peace and plenty, where,
Supporting and supported, polish'd friends,
And dear relations, mingle into bliss.
But this the rugged savage never felt,
Even desolate in crowds; and thus his days
Roll'd heavy, dark, and unenjoy'd, along:
A waste of time! till industry approach'd,
And rous'd him from his miserable sloth;
His faculties unfolded; pointed out
Where lavish Nature the directing hand
Of art demanded; show'd him how to raise
His feeble force by the mechanic powers;
To dig the mineral from the vaulted earth,
On what to turn the piercing rage of fire,
On what the torrent, and the gather'd blast;

Gave the tall ancient forest to his axe;
Taught him to chip the wood, and hew the stone,
Till by degrees the finish'd fabric rose;
Tore from his limbs the blood-polluted fur,
And wrapt them in the woolly vestment warm,
Or bright in glossy silk, and flowing lawn;
With wholesome viands fill'd his table, pour'd
The generous glass around, inspir'd to wake
The life-refining soul of decent wit:
Nor stopp'd at barren bare necessity;
But, still advancing bolder, led him on
To pomp, to pleasure, elegance, and grace;
And, breathing high ambition through his soul,
Set science, wisdom, glory, in his view,
And bade him be the lord of all below.

Then gathering men their natural powers combin'd,
And form'd a public; to the general good
Submitting, aiming, and conducting all.
For this the patriot council met, the full,
The free, and fairly represented whole;
For this they plann'd the holy guardian laws,
Distinguish'd orders, animated arts,

And with joint force oppression chaining, set
Imperial justice at the helm—yet still
To them accountable: nor slavish dream'd
The toiling millions must resign their weal,
And all the honey of their search, to such
As for themselves alone themselves have rais'd.
Hence every form of cultivated life
In order set, protected, and inspir'd,
Into perfection wrought. Uniting all,
Society grew numerous, high, polite,
And happy. Nurse of art! the city rear'd
In beauteous pride her tower-encircled head;
And, stretching street on street, by thousands drew,
From twining woody haunts, or the tough yew
To bows strong-straining, her aspiring sons.
Then commerce brought into the public walk
The busy merchant; the big warehouse built;
Rais'd the strong crane; chok'd up the loaded street
With foreign plenty; and thy stream, O Thames,
Large, gentle, deep, majestic, king of floods!
Chose for his grand resort. On either hand,
Like a long wintry forest, groves of masts

Shot up their spires; the bellying sheet between
Possess'd the breezy void; the sooty hulk
Steer'd sluggish on; the splendid barge along
Row'd regular to harmony; around,
The boat, light-skimming, stretch'd its oary wings;
While deep the various voice of fervent toil
From bank to bank increas'd; whence, ribb'd with oak,
To bear the British thunder, black and bold
The roaring vessel rush'd into the main.

Then too the pillar'd dome, magnific, heav'd
Its ample roof: and luxury within
Pour'd out her glittering stores: the canvass smooth,
With glowing life protuberant, to the view
Embodied rose; the statue seem'd to breathe,
And soften into flesh, beneath the touch
Of forming art, imagination-flush'd.

All is the gift of industry; whate'er
Exalts, embellishes, and renders life
Delightful. Pensive Winter, cheer'd by him,
Sits at the social fire, and happy hears
The excluded tempest idly rave along;
His harden'd fingers deck the gaudy Spring;

Without him, Summer were an arid waste;
Nor to the autumnal months could thus transmit
Those full, mature, immeasurable stores,
That, waving round, recall my wandering song.

Soon as the morning trembles o'er the sky,
And, unperceiv'd, unfolds the spreading day,
Before the ripen'd field the reapers stand,
In fair array; each by the lass he loves,
To bear the rougher part, and mitigate
By nameless gentle offices her toil.
At once they stoop and swell the lusty sheaves;
While through their cheerful band the rural talk,
The rural scandal, and the rural jest,
Fly harmless, to deceive the tedious time,
And steal unfelt the sultry hours away.
Behind, the master walks; builds up the shocks;
And, conscious, glancing oft on every side
His sated eye, feels his heart heave with joy.
The gleaners spread around; and here and there,
Spike after spike, their sparing harvest pick.
Be not too narrow, husbandmen! but fling
From the full sheaf, with charitable stealth,

The liberal handful. Think, oh grateful think!
How good the God of Harvest is to you;
Who pours abundance o'er your flowing fields—
While these unhappy partners of your kind
Wide-hover round you, like the fowls of heaven,
And ask their humble dole. The various turns
Of fortune ponder; that your sons may want
What now, with hard reluctance, faint, ye give.

The lovely young Lavinia once had friends;
And fortune smil'd, deceitful, on her birth.
For, in her helpless years depriv'd of all,
Of every stay save innocence and Heaven,
She, with her widow'd mother, feeble, old,
And poor, liv'd in a cottage, far retir'd
Among the windings of a woody vale;
By solitude and deep surrounding shades,
But more by bashful modesty, conceal'd.
Together thus they shunn'd the cruel scorn
Which virtue, sunk to poverty, would meet
From giddy fashion and low-minded pride;
Almost on Nature's common bounty fed,
Like the gay birds that sung them to repose,

Content, and careless of to-morrow's fare.
Her form was fresher than the morning rose,
When the dew wets its leaves; unstain'd and pure,
As is the lily, or the mountain snow.
The modest virtues mingled in her eyes,
Still on the ground dejected, darting all
Their humid beams into the blooming flowers;
Or when the mournful tale her mother told,
Of what her faithless fortune promis'd once,
Thrill'd in her thought, they, like the dewy star
Of evening, shone in tears. A native grace
Sat fair-proportion'd on her polish'd limbs,
Veil'd in a simple robe, their best attire,
Beyond the pomp of dress; for loveliness
Needs not the foreign aid of ornament,
But is when unadorn'd adorn'd the most.
Thoughtless of beauty, she was beauty's self,
Recluse amid the close-embowering woods.
As in the hollow breast of Apennine,
Beneath the shelter of encircling hills,
A myrtle rises, far from human eye,
And breathes its balmy fragrance o'er the wild,

So flourish'd blooming, and unseen by all,
The sweet Lavinia; till, at length, compell'd
By strong necessity's supreme command,
With smiling patience in her looks, she went
To glean Palemon's fields. The pride of swains
Palemon was, the generous, and the rich;
Who led the rural life in all its joy
And elegance, such as Arcadian song
Transmits from ancient uncorrupted times—
When tyrant custom had not shackled man,
But free to follow nature was the mode.
He then, his fancy with autumnal scenes
Amusing, chanc'd beside his reaper-train
To walk, when poor Lavinia drew his eye;
Unconscious of her power, and turning quick
With unaffected blushes from his gaze:
He saw her charming, but he saw not half
The charms her downcast modesty conceal'd.
That very moment love and chaste desire
Sprung in his bosom, to himself unknown;
For still the world prevail'd, and its dread laugh,
Which scarce the firm philosopher can scorn,

Should his heart own a gleaner in the field;
And thus in secret to his soul he sigh'd:
"What pity! that so delicate a form,
By beauty kindled, where enlivening sense
And more than vulgar goodness seem to dwell,
Should be devoted to the rude embrace
Of some indecent clown! She looks, methinks,
Of old Acasto's line; and to my mind
Recalls that patron of my happy life,
From whom my liberal fortune took its rise;
Now to the dust gone down—his houses, lands,
And once fair-spreading family, dissolv'd.
'Tis said that in some lone obscure retreat,
Urg'd by remembrance sad, and decent pride,
Far from those scenes which knew their better days,
His aged widow and his daughter live,
Whom yet my fruitless search could never find.
Romantic wish, would this the daughter were!"
When, strict inquiring, from herself he found
She was the same, the daughter of his friend,
Of bountiful Acasto—who can speak
The mingled passions that surpris'd his heart,

And through his nerves in shivering transport ran?
Then blaz'd his smother'd flame, avow'd and bold;
And as he view'd her, ardent, o'er and o'er,
Love, gratitude, and pity wept at once.
Confus'd, and frighten'd at his sudden tears,
Her rising beauties flush'd a higher bloom,
As thus Palemon, passionate and just,
Pour'd out the pious rapture of his soul:

"And art thou then Acasto's dear remains?
She whom my restless gratitude has sought
So long in vain? Oh yes! the very same,
The soften'd image of my noble friend;
Alive, his every feature, every look,
More elegantly touch'd. Sweeter than Spring!
Thou sole surviving blossom from the root
That nourish'd up my fortune, say, ah where,
In what sequester'd desert, hast thou drawn
The kindest aspect of delighted heaven?
Into such beauty spread, and blown so fair;
Though poverty's cold wind, and crushing rain,
Beat keen, and heavy, on thy tender years!
Oh let me now, into a richer soil,

Transplant thee safe! where vernal suns and showers
Diffuse their warmest, largest influence;
And of my garden be the pride and joy!
It ill befits thee, oh, it ill befits
Acasto's daughter—his whose open stores,
Though vast, were little to his ampler heart,
The father of a country, thus to pick
The very refuse of those harvest-fields
Which from his bounteous friendship I enjoy.
Then throw that shameful pittance from thy hand,
But ill-applied to such a rugged task:
The fields, the master, all, my fair, are thine;
If to the various blessings which thy house
Has on me lavish'd, thou wilt add that bliss,
That dearest bliss, the power of blessing thee!"

Here ceas'd the youth: yet still his speaking eye
Express'd the sacred triumph of his soul,
With conscious virtue, gratitude, and love,
Above the vulgar joy divinely rais'd.
Nor waited he reply. Won by the charm
Of goodness irresistible, and all
In sweet disorder lost, she blush'd consent.

The news immediate to her mother brought,
While, pierc'd with anxious thought, she pin'd away
The lonely moments for Lavinia's fate—
Amaz'd, and scarce believing what she heard,
Joy seiz'd her wither'd veins, and one bright gleam
Of setting life shone on her evening-hours:
Nor less enraptur'd than the happy pair;
Who flourish'd long in tender bliss, and rear'd
A numerous offspring, lovely like themselves,
And good, the grace of all the country round.

Defeating oft the labours of the year,
The sultry south collects a potent blast.
At first, the groves are scarcely seen to stir
Their trembling tops, and a still murmur runs
Along the soft-inclining fields of corn;
But as the aërial tempest fuller swells,
And in one mighty stream, invisible,
Immense, the whole excited atmosphere
Impetuous rushes o'er the sounding world,
Strain'd to the root, the stooping forest pours
A rustling shower of yet untimely leaves.
High-beat, the circling mountains eddy in,

From the bare wild, the dissipated storm,
And send it in a torrent down the vale.
Expos'd, and naked, to its utmost rage,
Through all the sea of harvest rolling round,
The billowy plain floats wide; nor can evade,
Though pliant to the blast, its seizing force—
Or whirl'd in air, or into vacant chaff
Shook waste. And sometimes too a burst of rain,
Swept from the black horizon, broad, descends
In one continuous flood. Still over head
The mingling tempest weaves its gloom, and still
The deluge deepens; till the fields around
Lie sunk, and flatted, in the sordid wave.
Sudden, the ditches swell; the meadows swim.
Red, from the hills, innumerable streams,
Tumultuous roar; and high above its banks
The river lift; before whose rushing tide,
Herds, flocks, and harvests, cottages, and swains,
Roll mingled down: all that the winds had spar'd,
In one wild moment ruin'd; the big hopes,
And well-earn'd treasures, of the painful year.
Fled to some eminence, the husbandman,

Helpless, beholds the miserable wreck
Driving along; his drowning ox at once
Descending, with his labours scatter'd round,
He sees; and instant o'er his shivering thought
Comes Winter unprovided, and a train
Of clamant children dear. Ye masters, then,
Be mindful of the rough laborious hand
That sinks you soft in elegance and ease;
Be mindful of those limbs, in russet clad,
Whose toil to yours is warmth and graceful pride;
And, oh, be mindful of that sparing board
Which covers yours with luxury profuse,
Makes your glass sparkle, and your sense rejoice!.
Nor cruelly demand what the deep rains
And all-involving winds have swept away.

Here the rude clamour of the sportsman's joy,
The gun fast-thundering, and the winded horn,
Would tempt the muse to sing the rural game:
How, in his mid-career, the spaniel struck,
Stiff, by the tainted gale, with open nose,
Outstretch'd and finely sensible, *draws* full,
Fearful, and cautious, on the latent prey;

As in the sun the circling covey bask
Their varied plumes, and, watchful every way,
Through the rough stubble turn the secret eye.
Caught in the meshy snare, in vain they beat
Their idle wings, entangled more and more:
Nor on the surges of the boundless air,
Though borne triumphant, are they safe; the gun,
Glanc'd just and sudden from the fowler's eye,
O'ertakes their sounding pinions; and, again,
Immediate brings them from the towering wing
Dead to the ground; or drives them wide-dispers'd,
Wounded, and wheeling various, down the wind.

These are not subjects for the peaceful muse,
Nor will she stain with such her spotless song;
Then most delighted, when she social sees
The whole mix'd animal creation round
Alive and happy. 'Tis not joy to her,
This falsely cheerful, barbarous game of death;
This rage of pleasure, which the restless youth
Awakes, impatient, with the gleaming morn;
When beasts of prey retire, that all night long,
Urg'd by necessity, had rang'd the dark,

As if their conscious ravage shunn'd the light,
Asham'd. Not so the steady tyrant man,
Who with the thoughtless insolence of power
Inflam'd, beyond the most infuriate wrath
Of the worst monster that e'er roam'd the waste,
For sport alone pursues the cruel chase,
Amid the beamings of the gentle days.
Upbraid, ye ravening tribes, our wanton rage,
For hunger kindles you, and lawless want;
But lavish fed, in Nature's bounty roll'd,
To joy at anguish, and delight in blood,
Is what your horrid bosoms never knew.

Poor is the triumph o'er the timid hare!
Scar'd from the corn, and now to some lone seat
Retir'd: the rushy fen; the ragged furze,
Stretch'd o'er the stony heath; the stubble chapp'd;
The thistly lawn; the thick entangled broom;
Of the same friendly hue, the wither'd fern;
The fallow ground laid open to the sun,
Concoctive; and the nodding sandy bank,
Hung o'er the mazes of the mountain brook.
Vain is her best precaution; though she sits

Conceal'd, with folded ears; unsleeping eyes,
By Nature rais'd to take the horizon in;
And head couch'd close betwixt her hairy feet,
In act to spring away. The scented dew
Betrays her early labyrinth; and deep,
In scatter'd sullen openings, far behind,
With every breeze she hears the coming storm.
But nearer, and more frequent, as it loads
The sighing gale, she springs amaz'd, and all
The savage soul of game is up at once:
The pack full-opening, various; the shrill horn,
Resounded from the hills; the neighing steed,
Wild for the chase; and the loud hunter's shout;
O'er a weak, harmless, flying creature, all
Mix'd in mad tumult, and discordant joy.

The stag too, singled from the herd, where long
He rang'd the branching monarch of the shades,
Before the tempest drives. At first, in speed
He, sprightly, puts his faith; and, rous'd by fear,
Gives all his swift aërial soul to flight.
Against the breeze he darts, that way the more
To leave the lessening murderous cry behind:

Deception short! though, fleeter than the winds
Blown o'er the keen-air'd mountain by the north,
He bursts the thickets, glances through the glades,
And plunges deep into the wildest wood—
If slow, yet sure, adhesive to the track
Hot-steaming, up behind him come again
The inhuman rout, and from the shady depth
Expel him, circling through his every shift.
He sweeps the forest oft; and sobbing sees
The glades, mild-opening to the golden day,
Where, in kind contest, with his butting friends
He wont to struggle, or his loves enjoy.
Oft in the full-descending flood he tries
To lose the scent, and lave his burning sides;
Oft seeks the herd: the watchful herd, alarm'd,
With selfish care avoid a brother's woe.
What shall he do? His once so vivid nerves,
So full of buoyant spirit, now no more
Inspire the course; but fainting breathless toil,
Sick, seizes on his heart: he stands at bay;
And puts his last weak refuge in despair.
The big round tears run down his dappled face;

He groans in anguish; while the growling pack,
Blood-happy, hang at his fair jutting chest,
And mark his beauteous chequer'd sides with gore.
Of this enough. But if the sylvan youth
Whose fervent blood boils into violence
Must have the chase—behold, despising flight,
The rous'd-up lion, resolute and slow,
Advancing full on the protended spear,
And coward band, that circling wheel aloof.
Slunk from the cavern, and the troubled wood,
See the grim wolf—on him his shaggy foe
Vindictive fix, and let the ruffian die;
Or, growling horrid, as the brindled boar
Grins fell destruction, to the monster's heart
Let the dart lighten from the nervous arm.
These Britain knows not; give, ye Britons, then
Your sportive fury, pitiless, to pour
Loose on the nightly robber of the fold:
Him, from his craggy winding haunts unearth'd,
Let all the thunder of the chase pursue.
Throw the broad ditch behind you; o'er the hedge
High-bound, resistless; nor the deep morass

Refuse, but through the shaking wilderness
Pick your nice way; into the perilous flood
Bear fearless, of the raging instinct full—
And as you ride the torrent, to the banks
Your triumph sound sonorous, running round,
From rock to rock, in circling echo toss'd;
Then scale the mountains to their woody tops;
Rush down the dangerous steep; and o'er the lawn,
In fancy swallowing up the space between,
Pour all your speed into the rapid game.
For happy he who tops the wheeling chase;
Has every maze evolv'd, and every guile
Disclos'd; who knows the merits of the pack;
Who saw the villain seiz'd, and dying hard,
Without complaint, though by an hundred mouths
Relentless torn: oh glorious he, beyond
His daring peers! when the retreating horn
Calls them to ghostly halls of gray renown,
With woodland honours grac'd; the fox's fur,
Depending decent from the roof; and, spread
Round the drear walls, with antic figures fierce,
The stag's large front: he then is loudest heard,

When the night staggers with severer toils,
With feats Thessalian centaurs never knew,
And their repeated wonders shake the dome.
But first the fuel'd chimney blazes wide;
The tankards foam; and the strong table groans
Beneath the smoking sirloin, stretch'd immense
From side to side; in which, with desperate knife,
They deep incision make, and talk the while
Of England's glory, ne'er to be defaced
While hence they borrow vigour: or amain
Into the pasty plung'd, at intervals,
If stomach keen can intervals allow,
Relating all the glories of the chase.
Then sated hunger bids his brother thirst
Produce the mighty bowl; the mighty bowl,
Swell'd high with fiery juice, steams liberal round
A potent gale, delicious as the breath
Of Maia to the love-sick shepherdess,
On violets diffus'd, while soft she hears
Her panting shepherd stealing to her arms.
Nor wanting is the brown *October*, drawn,
Mature and perfect, from his dark retreat

Of thirty years; and now his honest front
Flames in the light refulgent, not afraid
Even with the vineyard's best produce to vie.
To cheat the thirsty moments, whist a while
Walks his grave round, beneath a cloud of smoke,
Wreath'd fragrant from the pipe; or the quick dice,
In thunder leaping from the box, awake
The sounding gammon; while romp-loving miss
Is haul'd about, in gallantry robust.

At last these puling idlenesses laid
Aside, frequent and full, the dry divan
Close in firm circle; and set, ardent, in
For serious drinking. Nor evasion sly,
Nor sober shift, is to the puking wretch
Indulg'd apart; but earnest, brimming bowls
Lave every soul, the table floating round,
And pavement, faithless to the fuddled foot.
Thus as they swim in mutual swill, the talk,
Vociferous at once from twenty tongues,
Reels fast from theme to theme; from horses, hounds,
To church or mistress, politics or ghost,
In endless mazes, intricate, perplex'd.

Meantime, with sudden interruption, loud,
The impatient catch bursts from the joyous heart:
That moment, touch'd is each congenial soul;
And, opening in a full-mouth'd *cry* of joy,
The laugh, the slap, the jocund curse goes round;
While, from their slumbers shook, the kennel'd hounds
Mix in the music of the day again.
As when the tempest, that has vex'd the deep
The dark night long, with fainter murmurs falls;
So gradual sinks their mirth. Their feeble tongues,
Unable to take up the cumbrous word,
Lie quite dissolv'd. Before their maudlin eyes,
Seen dim and blue, the double tapers dance,
Like the sun wading through the misty sky,
Then, sliding soft, they drop. Confus'd above,
Glasses and bottles, pipes and gazetteers,
As if the table even itself was drunk,
Lie a wet broken scene; and wide, below,
Is heap'd the social slaughter—where astride
The lubber power in filthy triumph sits,
Slumbrous, inclining still from side to side,
And steeps them drench'd in potent sleep till morn.

Perhaps some doctor, of tremendous paunch,
Awful and deep, a black abyss of drink,
Outlives them all; and from his buried flock
Retiring, full of rumination sad,
Laments the weakness of these latter times.

But if the rougher sex by this fierce sport
Is hurried wild, let not such horrid joy
E'er stain the bosom of the British fair.
Far be the spirit of the chase from them!
Uncomely courage, unbeseeming skill,
To spring the fence, to rein the prancing steed—
The cap, the whip, the masculine attire,
In which they roughen to the sense, and all
The winning softness of their sex is lost.
In them 'tis graceful to dissolve at woe;
With every motion, every word, to wave
Quick o'er the kindling cheek the ready blush;
And from the smallest violence to shrink,
Unequal, then the loveliest in their fears—
And by this silent adulation, soft,
To their protection more engaging man.
Oh may their eyes no miserable sight,

Save weeping lovers, see! a nobler game,
Through love's enchanting wiles pursu'd, yet fled,
In chase ambiguous. May their tender limbs
Float in the loose simplicity of dress!
And, fashion'd all to harmony, alone
Know they to seize the captivated soul,
In rapture warbled from love-breathing lips;
To teach the lute to languish; with smooth step,
Disclosing motion in its every charm,
To swim along, and swell the mazy dance;
To train the foliage o'er the snowy lawn;
To guide the pencil, turn the tuneful page;
To lend new flavour to the fruitful year,
And heighten Nature's dainties; in their race,
To rear their graces into second life;
To give society its highest taste;
Well-order'd home, man's best delight to make;
And by submissive wisdom, modest skill,
With every gentle care-eluding art,
To raise the virtues, animate the bliss,
Even charm the pains to something more than joy,
And sweeten all the toils of human life:

This be the female dignity, and praise.

Ye swains, now hasten to the hazel bank;
Where, down yon dale, the wildly winding brook
Falls hoarse from steep to steep. In close array,
Fit for the thickets and the tangling shrub,
Ye virgins, come. For you their latest song
The woodlands raise; the clustering nuts for you
The lover finds amid the secret shade;
And, where they burnish on the topmost bough,
With active vigour crushes down the tree;
Or shakes them ripe from the resigning husk,
A glossy shower, and of an ardent brown,
As are the ringlets of Melinda's hair:
Melinda, form'd with every grace complete,
Yet these neglecting, above beauty wise,
And far transcending such a vulgar praise.

Hence from the busy joy-resounding fields,
In cheerful error, let us tread the maze
Of Autumn, unconfin'd; and taste, reviv'd,
The breath of orchard big with bending fruit.
Obedient to the breeze and beating ray,
From the deep-loaded bough a mellow shower

Incessant melts away. The juicy pear
Lies, in a soft profusion, scatter'd round.
A various sweetness swells the gentle race;
By Nature's all-refining hand prepar'd,
Of temper'd sun, and water, earth, and air,
In ever-changing composition mix'd.
Such, falling frequent through the chiller night,
The fragrant stores, the wide-projected heaps
Of apples, which the lusty-handed year,
Innumerous, o'er the blushing orchard shakes.
A various spirit, fresh, delicious, keen,
Dwells in their gelid pores; and, active, points
The piercing cider for the thirsty tongue:
Thy native theme, and boon inspirer too,
Philips, Pomona's bard, the second thou
Who nobly durst, in rhyme-unfetter'd verse,
With British freedom sing the British song;
How, from Silurian vats, high-sparkling wines
Foam in transparent floods—some strong, to cheer
The wintry revels of the labouring hind,
And tasteful some, to cool the summer hours.

In this glad season, while his sweetest beams

The sun sheds equal o'er the meeken'd day,
Oh lose me in the green delightful walks
Of, Dodington! thy seat, serene and plain;
Where simple nature reigns; and every view,
Diffusive, spreads the pure Dorsetian downs,
In boundless prospect—yonder shagg'd with wood,
Here rich with harvest, and there white with flocks!
Meantime the grandeur of thy lofty dome,
Far-splendid, seizes on the ravish'd eye.
New beauties rise with each revolving day;
New columns swell; and still the fresh Spring finds
New plants to quicken, and new groves to green
Full of thy genius all! the muses' seat;
Where in the secret bower, and winding walk,
For virtuous Young and thee they twine the bay.
Here wandering oft, fir'd with the restless thirst
Of thy applause, I solitary court
The inspiring breeze; and meditate the book
Of Nature, ever open—aiming thence,
Warm from the heart, to learn the moral song.
And, as I steal along the sunny wall,
Where Autumn basks, with fruit empurpled deep,

My pleasing theme continual prompts my thought:
Presents the downy peach; the shining plum,
With a fine bluish mist of animals
Clouded; the ruddy nectarine; and, dark
Beneath his ample leaf, the luscious fig.
The vine too here her curling tendrils shoots;
Hangs out her clusters, glowing to the south;
And scarcely wishes for a warmer sky.

Turn we a moment fancy's rapid flight
To vigorous soils, and climes of fair extent;
Where, by the potent sun elated high,
The vineyard swells refulgent on the day;
Spreads o'er the vale; or up the mountain climbs,
Profuse; and drinks amid the sunny rocks,
From cliff to cliff increas'd, the heighten'd blaze.
Low bend the weighty boughs. The clusters clear,
Half through the foliage seen, or ardent flame,
Or shine transparent; while perfection breathes
White o'er the turgent film the living dew.
As thus they brighten with exalted juice,
Touch'd into flavour by the mingling ray,
The rural youth and virgins o'er the field

Each fond for each to cull the autumnal prime,
Exulting rove, and speak the vintage nigh.
Then comes the crushing swain; the country floats,
And foams unbounded with the mashy flood;
That by degrees fermented, and refin'd,
Round the rais'd nations pours the cup of joy:
The claret smooth, red as the lip we press
In sparkling fancy, while we drain the bowl;
The mellow-tasted burgundy; and, quick
As is the wit it gives, the gay champagne.

Now, by the cool declining year condens'd,
Descend the copious exhalations, check'd
As up the middle sky unseen they stole,
And roll the doubling fogs around the hill.
No more the mountain, horrid, vast, sublime,
Who pours a sweep of rivers from his sides,
And high between contending kingdoms rears
The rocky long division, fills the view
With great variety; but in a night
Of gathering vapour, from the baffled sense,
Sinks dark and dreary. Thence expanding far,
The huge dusk, gradual, swallows up the plain.

Vanish the woods. The dim-seen river seems
Sullen, and slow, to roll the misty wave.
Even in the height of noon oppress'd, the sun
Sheds weak, and blunt, his wide-refracted ray;
Whence glaring oft, with many a broaden'd orb,
He frights the nations. Indistinct on earth,
Seen through the turbid air, beyond the life
Objects appear—and, wilder'd, o'er the waste
The shepherd stalks gigantic; till at last
Wreath'd dun around, in deeper circle still
Successive closing, sits the general fog
Unbounded o'er the world—and, mingling thick,
A formless gray confusion covers all:
As when of old (so sung the Hebrew bard)
Light, uncollected, through the chaos urg'd
Its infant way; nor order yet had drawn
His lovely train from out the dubious gloom.

These roving mists, that constant now begin
To smoke along the hilly country, these,
With weighty rains, and melted alpine snows,
The mountain-cisterns fill, those ample stores
Of water, scoop'd among the hollow rocks;

Whence gush the streams, the ceaseless fountains play,
And their unfailing wealth the rivers draw.
Some sages say, that, where the numerous wave
For ever lashes the resounding shore,
Drill'd through the sandy stratum, every way,
The waters with the sandy stratum rise;
Amid whose angles infinitely strain'd,
They joyful leave their jaggy salts behind,
And clear and sweeten as they soak along.
Nor stops the restless fluid, mounting still,
Though oft amidst the irriguous vale it springs;
But to the mountain courted by the sand,
That leads it darkling on in faithful maze,
Far from the parent-main, it boils again
Fresh into day—and all the glittering hill
Is bright with spouting rills. But hence this vain
Amusive dream! why should the waters love
To take so far a journey to the hills,
When the sweet valleys offer to their toil
Inviting quiet, and a nearer bed?
Or if, by blind ambition led astray,
They must aspire, why should they sudden stop

Among the broken mountain's rushy dells,
And, ere they gain its highest peak, desert
The attractive sand that charm'd their course so long?
Besides, the hard agglomerating salts,
The spoil of ages, would impervious choke
Their secret channels; or, by slow degrees,
High as the hills protrude the swelling vales:
Old ocean too, suck'd through the porous globe,
Had long ere now forsook his horrid bed,
And brought Deucalion's watery times again.

Say then, where lurk the vast eternal springs,
That, like creating Nature, lie conceal'd
From mortal eye, yet with their lavish stores
Refresh the globe, and all its joyous tribes?
O thou pervading genius, given to man
To trace the secrets of the dark abyss,
Oh lay the mountains bare; and wide display
Their hidden structure to the astonish'd view!
Strip from the branching Alps their piny load;
The huge incumbrance of horrific woods
From Asian Taurus, from Imaüs stretch'd
Athwart the roving Tartar's sullen bounds;

Give opening Hæmus to my searching eye,
And high Olympus[1] pouring many a stream!
Oh, from the sounding summits of the north,
The Dofrine hills, through Scandinavia roll'd
To farthest Lapland and the frozen main;
From lofty Caucasus, far seen by those
Who in the Caspían and black Euxine toil
From cold Rhipæan rocks, which the wild Russ
Believes the stony girdle[2] of the world;
And all the dreadful mountains, wrapt in storm,
Whence wide Siberia draws her lonely floods—
Oh sweep the eternal snows! Hung o'er the deep,
That ever works beneath his sounding base,
Bid Atlas, propping heaven, as poets feign,
His subterranean wonders spread; unveil
The miny caverns, blazing on the day,
Of Abyssinia's cloud-compelling cliffs,
And of the bending Mountains of the Moon;[3]
O'ertopping all these giant sons of earth,
Let the dire Andes, from the radiant *line*
Stretch'd to the stormy seas that thunder round
The southern pole, their hideous deeps unfold!

Amazing scene! Behold! the glooms disclose:
I see the rivers in their infant beds;
Deep, deep I hear them, labouring to get free.
I see the leading strata, artful rang'd;
The gaping fissures to receive the rains,
The melting snows, and ever-dripping fogs.
Strew'd bibulous above I see the sands,
The pebbly gravel next, the layers then
Of mingled moulds, of more retentive earths,
The gutter'd rocks and mazy-running clefts;
That, while the stealing moisture they transmit,
Retard its motion, and forbid its waste.
Beneath the incessant weeping of these drains,
I see the rocky siphons stretch'd immense,
The mighty reservoirs, of harden'd chalk,
Or stiff compacted clay, capacious form'd.
O'erflowing thence, the congregated stores,
The crystal treasures of the liquid world,
Through the stirr'd sands a bubbling passage burst;
And welling out, around the middle steep,
Or from the bottoms of the bosom'd hills,
In pure effusion flow. United, thus,

The exhaling sun, the vapour-burden'd air,
The gelid mountains, that to rain condens'd
These vapours in continual current draw,
And send them, o'er the fair-divided earth,
In bounteous rivers to the deep again,
A social commerce hold, and firm support
The full-adjusted harmony of things.

When Autumn scatters his departing gleams,
Warn'd of approaching Winter, gather'd, play
The swallow-people; and toss'd wide around,
O'er the calm sky, in convolution swift,
The feather'd eddy floats: rejoicing once,
Ere to their wintry slumbers they retire—
In clusters clung, beneath the mouldering bank,
And where, unpierc'd by frost, the cavern sweats.
Or rather into warmer climes convey'd,
With other kindred birds of season, there
They twitter cheerful, till the vernal months
Invite them welcome back; for, thronging, now
Innumerous wings are in commotion all.

Where the Rhine loses its majestic force
In Belgian plains, won from the raging deep

By diligence amazing, and the strong
Unconquerable hand of liberty,
The stork-assembly meets; for many a day,
Consulting deep, and various, ere they take
Their arduous voyage through the liquid sky.
And now their route design'd, their leaders chose,
Their tribes adjusted, clean'd their vigorous wings—
And many a circle, many a short essay,
Wheel'd round and round—in congregation full
The figur'd flight ascends; and, riding high
The aërial billows, mixes with the clouds.

Or where the Northern Ocean, in vast whirls,
Boils round the naked melancholy isles
Of farthest Thulè, and the Atlantic surge
Pours in among the stormy Hebrides—
Who can recount what transmigrations there
Are annual made? what nations come and go?
And how the living clouds on clouds arise?
Infinite wings! till all the plume-dark air,
And rude resounding shore, are one wild cry.

Here the plain harmless native his small flock,
And herd diminutive of many hues,

Tends on the little island's verdant swell,
The shepherd's sea-girt reign; or, to the rocks
Dire-clinging, gathers his ovarious food;
Or sweeps the fishy shore; or treasures up
The plumage, rising full, to form the bed
Of luxury. And here a while the muse,
High-hovering o'er the broad cerulean scene,
Sees Caledonia, in romantic view:
Her airy mountains, from the waving main,
Invested with a keen diffusive sky,
Breathing the soul acute; her forests huge,
Incult, robust, and tall, by Nature's hand
Planted of old; her azure lakes between,
Pour'd out extensive, and of watery wealth
Full; winding deep, and green her fertile vales—
With many a cool translucent brimming flood
Wash'd lovely, from the Tweed (pure *parent-stream*,
Whose pastoral banks first heard my Doric reed,
With, sylvan Jed, thy tributary brook)
To where the north-inflated tempest foams
O'er Orcas' or Berubium's highest peak.
Nurse of a people, in misfortune's school

Train'd up to hardy deeds; soon visited
By learning, when before the Gothic rage
She took her western flight. A manly race,
Of unsubmitting spirit, wise and brave;
Who still through bleeding ages struggled hard
(As well unhappy Wallace can attest,
Great patriot-hero! ill-requited chief!)
To hold a generous undiminish'd state—
Too much in vain! Hence of unequal bounds
Impatient, and by tempting glory borne
O'er every land, for every land their life
Has flow'd profuse, their piercing genius plann'd,
And swell'd the pomp of peace their faithful toil:
As from their own clear north, in radiant streams,
Bright over Europe bursts the boreal morn.

Oh! is there not some patriot, in whose power
That best, that godlike luxury is plac'd,
Of blessing thousands, thousands yet unborn,
Through late posterity? some, large of soul,
To cheer dejected industry, to give
A double harvest to the pining swain,
And teach the labouring hand the sweets of toil?

How, by the finest art, the native robe
To weave; how, white as hyperborean snow,
To form the lucid lawn; with venturous oar
How to dash wide the billow; nor look on,
Shamefully passive, while Batavian fleets
Defraud us of the glittering finny swarms,
That heave our friths, and crowd upon our shores;
How all-enlivening trade to rouse, and wing
The prosperous sail, from every growing port,
Uninjur'd round the sea-encircled globe;
And thus, in soul united as in name,
Bid Britain reign the mistress of the deep!

Yes, there are such. And full on thee, Argyle,
Her hope, her stay, her darling, and her boast,
From her first patriots and her heroes sprung,
Thy fond imploring country turns her eye;
In thee, with all a mother's triumph, sees
Her every virtue, every grace combin'd,
Her genius, wisdom, her engaging turn,
Her pride of honour, and her courage tried,
Calm, and intrepid, in the very throat
Of sulphurous war, on Taisniere's dreadful field.

Nor less the palm of peace inwreathes thy brow:
For, powerful as thy sword, from thy rich tongue
Persuasion flows, and wins the high debate;
While mix'd in thee combine the charm of youth,
The force of manhood, and the depth of age.
Thee, Forbès, too, whom every worth attends,
As truth sincere, as weeping friendship kind—
Thee, truly generous, and in silence great,
Thy country feels through her reviving arts,
Plann'd by thy wisdom, by thy soul inform'd;
And seldom has she felt a friend like thee.

But see the fading many-colour'd woods,
Shade deepening over shade, the country round
Imbrown; a crowded umbrage, dusk and dun,
Of every hue from wan declining green
To sooty dark. These now the lonesome muse,
Low-whispering, lead into their leaf-strown walks;
And give the season in its latest view.

Meantime, light-shadowing all, a sober calm
Fleeces unbounded ether; whose least wave
Stands tremulous, uncertain where to turn
The gentle current: while, illumin'd wide,

The dewy-skirted clouds imbibe the sun,
And through their lucid veil his soften'd force
Shed o'er the peaceful world. Then is the time
For those whom wisdom and whom nature charm
To steal themselves from the degenerate crowd,
And soar above this little scene of things;
To tread low-thoughted vice beneath their feet,
To soothe the throbbing passions into peace,
And woo lone quiet in her silent walks.

Thus solitary, and in pensive guise,
Oft let me wander o'er the russet mead,
And through the sadden'd grove, where scarce is heard
One dying strain to cheer the woodman's toil.
Haply some widow'd songster pours his plaint,
Far, in faint warblings, through the tawny copse;
While congregated thrushes, linnets, larks,
And each wild throat, whose artless strains so late
Swell'd all the music of the swarming shades,
Robb'd of their tuneful souls, now shivering sit
On the dead tree, a dull despondent flock!
With not a brightness waving o'er their plumes,
And nought save chattering discord in their note.

Oh let not, aim'd from some inhuman eye,
The gun the music of the coming year
Destroy; and harmless, unsuspecting harm,
Lay the weak tribes, a miserable prey,
In mingled murder, fluttering on the ground!

The pale descending year, yet pleasing still,
A gentler mood inspires; for now the leaf
Incessant rustles from the mournful grove—
Oft startling such as, studious, walk below,
And slowly circles through the waving air.
But should a quicker breeze amid the boughs
Sob, o'er the sky the leafy deluge streams;
Till chok'd, and matted with the dreary shower,
The forest walks, at every rising gale,
Roll wide the wither'd waste, and whistle bleak.
Fled is the blasted verdure of the fields;
And, shrunk into their beds, the flowery race
Their sunny robes resign. Even what remain'd
Of bolder fruits falls from the naked tree;
And woods, fields, gardens, orchards, all around
The desolated prospect thrills the soul.

He comes! he comes! in every breeze the power

Of philosophic melancholy comes!
His near approach the sudden-starting tear,
The glowing cheek, the mild dejected air,
The soften'd feature, and the beating heart,
Pierc'd deep with many a virtuous pang, declare.
O'er all the soul his sacred influence breathes;
Inflames imagination; through the breast
Infuses every tenderness; and far
Beyond dim earth exalts the swelling thought.
Ten thousand thousand fleet ideas, such
As never mingled with the vulgar dream,
Crowd fast into the mind's creative eye.
As fast the correspondent passions rise,
As varied, and as high: devotion rais'd
To rapture, and divine astonishment;
The love of nature unconfin'd, and, chief,
Of human race; the large ambitious wish,
To make them blest; the sigh for suffering worth,
Lost in obscurity; the noble scorn
Of tyrant-pride; the fearless great resolve;
The wonder which the dying patriot draws,
Inspiring glory through remotest time;

The awaken'd throb for virtue, and for fame;
The sympathies of love, and friendship dear;
With all the social offspring of the heart.
Oh! bear me then to vast embowering shades,
To twilight groves, and visionary vales,
To weeping grottos, and prophetic glooms!
Where angel-forms athwart the solemn dusk
Tremendous sweep, or seem to sweep, along;
And voices more than human, through the void
Deep-sounding, seize the enthusiastic ear.
Or is this gloom too much? Then lead, ye powers
That o'er the garden and the rural seat
Preside, which shining through the cheerful land
In countless numbers blest Britannia sees,
Oh lead me to the wide-extended walks,
The fair majestic paradise of Stowe!
Not Persian Cyrus on Ionia's shore
E'er saw such sylvan scenes; such various art
By genius fir'd, such ardent genius tam'd
By cool judicious art—that, in the strife,
All-beauteous Nature fears to be outdone.
And there, O Pitt! thy country's early boast,

There let me sit beneath the shelter'd slopes,
Or in that temple[4] where, in future times,
Thou well shalt merit a distinguish'd name;
And, with thy converse blest, catch the last smiles
Of Autumn beaming o'er the yellow woods.
While there with thee the enchanted round I walk,
The regulated wild, gay fancy then
Will tread in thought the groves of Attic land;
Will from thy standard taste refine her own,
Correct her pencil to the purest truth
Of Nature, or, the unimpassion'd shades
Forsaking, raise it to the human mind.
Oh if hereafter she, with juster hand,
Shall draw the tragic scene, instruct her thou,
To mark the varied movements of the heart,
What every decent character requires,
And every passion speaks—oh! through her strain
Breathe thy pathetic eloquence! that moulds
The attentive senate, charms, persuades, exalts,
Of honest zeal the indignant lightning throws,
And shakes corruption on her venal throne.
While thus we talk, and through Elysian vales

Delighted rove, perhaps a sigh escapes:
What pity, Cobham, thou thy verdant files
Of order'd trees should'st here inglorious range,
Instead of squadrons flaming o'er the field,
And long-embattled hosts! when the proud foe,
The faithless vain disturber of mankind,
Insulting Gaul, has rous'd the world to war;
When keen, once more, within their bounds to press
Those polish'd robbers, those ambitious slaves,
The British youth would hail thy wise command,
Thy temper'd ardour, and thy veteran skill.

The western sun withdraws the shorten'd day;
And humid evening, gliding o'er the sky,
In her chill progress, to the ground condens'd
The vapours throws. Where creeping waters ooze,
Where marshes stagnate, and where rivers wind,
Cluster the rolling fogs, and swim along
The dusky-mantled lawn. Meanwhile the moon,
Full-orb'd and breaking through the scatter'd clouds,
Shows her broad visage in the crimson'd east.
Turn'd to the sun direct, her spotted disk,
Where mountains rise, umbrageous dales descend,

And caverns deep, as optic tube descries,
A smaller earth, gives all his blaze again,
Void of its flame, and sheds a softer day.
Now through the passing cloud she seems to stoop,
Now up the pure cerulean rides sublime.
Wide the pale deluge floats, and streaming mild
O'er the skied mountain to the shadowy vale,
While rocks and floods reflect the quivering gleam,
The whole air whitens with a boundless tide
Of silver radiance, trembling round the world.

But when half-blotted from the sky her light,
Fainting, permits the starry fires to burn
With keener lustre through the depth of heaven—
Or quite extinct her deaden'd orb appears,
And scarce appears, of sickly beamless white—
Oft in this season, silent from the north
A blaze of meteors shoots: ensweeping first
The lower skies, they all at once converge
High to the crown of heaven, and all at once
Relapsing quick as quickly re-ascend,
And mix, and thwart, extinguish, and renew—
All ether coursing in a maze of light.

From look to look, contagious through the crowd,
The panic runs, and into wondrous shapes
The appearance throws: armies in meet array,
Throng'd with aërial spears, and steeds of fire;
Till, the long lines of full-extended war
In bleeding fight commix'd, the sanguine flood
Rolls a broad slaughter o'er the plains of heaven.
As thus they scan the visionary scene,
On all sides swells the superstitious din,
Incontinent; and busy frenzy talks
Of blood and battle; cities overturn'd,
And late at night in swallowing earthquake sunk,
Or hideous wrapt in fierce ascending flame;
Of sallow famine, inundation, storm;
Of pestilence, and every great distress;
Empires subvers'd, when ruling fate has struck
The unalterable hour: even Nature's self
Is deem'd to totter on the brink of time.
Not so the man of philosophic eye,
And inspect sage; the waving brightness he
Curious surveys, inquisitive to know
The causes, and materials, yet unfix'd,

Of this appearance beautiful and new.

Now black, and deep, the night begins to fall,
A shade immense. Sunk in the quenching gloom,
Magnificent and vast, are heaven and earth.
Order confounded lies; all beauty void;
Distinction lost; and gay variety
One universal blot: such the fair power
Of light, to kindle and create the whole.
Drear is the state of the benighted wretch,
Who then, bewilder'd, wanders through the dark,
Full of pale fancies, and chimeras huge;
Nor visited by one directive ray,
From cottage streaming, or from airy hall.
Perhaps, impatient as he stumbles on,
Struck from the root of slimy rushes, blue
The wild-fire scatters round, or gather'd trails
A length of flame deceitful o'er the moss—
Whither decoy'd by the fantastic blaze,
Now lost and now renew'd, he sinks absorpt,
Rider and horse, amid the miry gulf;
While still, from day to day, his pining wife
And plaintive children his return await,

In wild conjecture lost. At other times,
Sent by the better genius of the night,
Innoxious, gleaming on the horse's mane,
The meteor sits; and shows the narrow path,
That winding leads through pits of death, or else
Instructs him how to take the dangerous ford.

The lengthen'd night elaps'd, the morning shines
Serene, in all her dewy beauty bright,
Unfolding fair the last autumnal day.
And now the mounting sun dispels the fog;
The rigid hoar-frost melts before his beam;
And hung on every spray, on every blade
Of grass, the myriad dewdrops twinkle round.

Ah see where robb'd, and murder'd, in that pit
Lies the still heaving hive! at evening snatch'd,
Beneath the cloud of guilt-concealing night,
And fix'd o'er sulphur; while, not dreaming ill,
The happy people, in their waxen cells,
Sat tending public cares, and planning schemes
Of temperance, for Winter poor—rejoic'd
To mark, full-flowing round, their copious stores.
Sudden the dark oppressive steam ascends;

And, us'd to milder scents, the tender race,
By thousands, tumble from their honey'd domes,
Convolv'd, and agonizing in the dust.
And was it then for this you roam'd the Spring,
Intent from flower to flower? for this you toil'd
Ceaseless the burning summer-heats away?
For this in Autumn search'd the blooming waste,
Nor lost one sunny gleam? for this sad fate?
O man! tyrannic lord! how long, how long,
Shall prostrate nature groan beneath your rage,
Awaiting renovation? When oblig'd,
Must you destroy? Of their ambrosial food
Can you not borrow; and, in just return,
Afford them shelter from the wintry winds;
Or, as the sharp year pinches, with their own
Again regale them on some smiling day?
See where the stony bottom of their town
Looks desolate, and wild; with here and there
A helpless number, who the ruin'd state
Survive, lamenting weak, cast out to death.
Thus a proud city, populous and rich,
Full of the works of peace, and high in joy,

At theatre or feast, or sunk in sleep
(As late, Palermo, was thy fate) is seiz'd
By some dread earthquake, and convulsive hurl'd,
Sheer from the black foundation, stench-involv'd,
Into a gulf of blue sulphureous flame.

Hence every harsher sight! for now the day,
O'er heaven and earth diffus'd, grows warm and high,
Infinite splendour! wide-investing all.
How still the breeze! save what the filmy threads
Of dew evaporate brushes from the plain.
How clear the cloudless sky! how deeply ting'd
With a peculiar blue! the ethereal arch
How swell'd immense! amid whose azure thron'd
The radiant sun how gay! how calm below,
The gilded earth! the harvest-treasures all
Now gather'd in, beyond the rage of storms,
Sure to the swain; the circling fence shut up;
And instant Winter's utmost rage defied:
While, loose to festive joy, the country round
Laughs with the loud sincerity of mirth,
Shook to the wind their cares. The toil-strung youth,
By the quick sense of music taught alone,

Leaps wildly graceful in the lively dance.
Her every charm abroad, the village toast,
Young, buxom, warm, in native beauty rich,
Darts not-unmeaning looks; and, where her eye
Points an approving smile, with double force
The cudgel rattles, and the wrestler twines.
Age too shines out; and, garrulous, recounts
The feats of youth. Thus they rejoice; nor think
That, with to-morrow's sun, their annual toil
Begins again the never-ceasing round.

Oh! knew he but his happiness, of men
The happiest he, who far from public rage,
Deep in the vale, with a choice few retir'd,
Drinks the pure pleasures of the rural life!
What though the dome be wanting, whose proud gate,
Each morning, vomits out the sneaking crowd
Of flatterers false, and in their turn abus'd?
Wild intercourse! What though the glittering robe,
Of every hue reflected light can give,
Or floating loose, or stiff with mazy gold,
The pride and gaze of fools! oppress him not?
What though, from utmost land and sea purvey'd,

For him each rarer tributary life
Bleeds not, and his insatiate table heaps
With luxury, and death? What though his bowl
Flames not with costly juice; nor, sunk in beds,
Oft of gay care, he tosses out the night,
Or melts the thoughtless hours in idle state?
What though he knows not those fantastic joys,
That still amuse the wanton, still deceive;
A face of pleasure, but a heart of pain;
Their hollow moments undelighted all?
Sure peace is his; a solid life, estrang'd
To disappointment, and fallacious hope:
Rich in content, in Nature's bounty rich,
In herds and fruits; whatever greens the Spring
When heaven descends in showers, or bends the bough
When Summer reddens and when Autumn beams,
Or in the wintry glebe whatever lies
Conceal'd, and fattens with the richest sap—
These are not wanting; nor the milky drove,
Luxuriant, spread o'er all the lowing vale;
Nor bleating mountains; nor the chide of streams,
And hum of bees, inviting sleep sincere

Into the guiltless breast, beneath the shade,
Or thrown at large amid the fragrant hay;
Nor aught besides of prospect, grove, or song,
Dim grottos, gleaming lakes, and fountain clear.
Here too dwells simple truth; plain innocence;
Unsullied beauty; sound unbroken youth,
Patient of labour, with a little pleas'd;
Health ever-blooming; unambitious toil;
Calm contemplation, and poetic ease.

Let others brave the flood in quest of gain,
And beat, for joyless months, the gloomy wave.
Let such as deem it glory to destroy,
Rush into blood, the sack of cities seek;
Unpierc'd, exulting in the widow's wail,
The virgin's shriek, and infant's trembling cry.
Let some, far-distant from their native soil,
Urg'd or by want or harden'd avarice,
Find other lands beneath another sun.
Let this through cities work his eager way,
By legal outrage and establish'd guile,
The social sense extinct; and that ferment
Mad into tumult the seditious herd,

Or melt them down to slavery. Let these
Ensnare the wretches in the toils of law,
Fomenting discord, and perplexing right,
An iron race! and those of fairer front,
But equal inhumanity, in courts,
Delusive pomp, and dark cabals, delight;
Wreathe the deep bow, diffuse the lying smile,
And tread the weary labyrinth of state.
While he, from all the stormy passions free
That restless men involve, hears, and but hears,
At distance safe, the human tempest roar,
Wrapt close in conscious peace. The fall of kings,
The rage of nations, and the crush of states,
Move not the man who, from the world escap'd,
In still retreats, and flowery solitudes,
To Nature's voice attends, from month to month,
And day to day, through the revolving year;
Admiring sees her in her every shape;
Feels all her sweet emotions at his heart;
Takes what she liberal gives, nor thinks of more.
He, when young Spring protrudes the bursting gems,
Marks the first bud, and sucks the healthful gale

Into his freshen'd soul; her genial hours
He full enjoys; and not a beauty blows,
And not an opening blossom breathes, in vain.
In summer he, beneath the living shade,
Such as o'er frigid Tempè wont to wave,
Or Hæmus cool, reads what the muse, of these
Perhaps, has in immortal numbers sung;
Or what she dictates writes; and oft, an eye
Shot round, rejoices in the vigorous year.
When Autumn's yellow lustre gilds the world,
And tempts the sickled swain into the field,
Seiz'd by the general joy, his heart distends
With gentle throes; and, through the tepid gleams
Deep-musing, then he *best* exerts his song.
Even Winter wild to him is full of bliss.
The mighty tempest, and the hoary waste,
Abrupt and deep, stretch'd o'er the buried earth,
Awake to solemn thought. At night the skies,
Disclos'd, and kindled, by refining frost,
Pour every lustre on the exalted eye.
A friend, a book, the stealing hours secure,
And mark them down for wisdom. With swift wing,

O'er land and sea imagination roams;
Or truth, divinely breaking on his mind,
Elates his being, and unfolds his powers;
Or in his breast heroic virtue burns.
The touch of kindred too and love he feels;
The modest eye, whose beams on his alone
Ecstatic shine; the little strong embrace
Of prattling children, twin'd around his neck,
And emulous to please him, calling forth
The fond parental soul. Nor purpose gay,
Amusement, dance, or song, he sternly scorns;
For happiness and true philosophy
Are of the social still, and smiling kind.
This is the life which those who fret in guilt
And guilty cities, never knew; the life
Led by primeval ages, uncorrupt,
When angels dwelt, and God himself, with man!
O Nature! all-sufficient! over all!
Enrich me with a knowledge of thy works!
Snatch me to heaven; thy rolling wonders there,
World beyond world, in infinite extent,
Profusely scatter'd o'er the void immense,

Show me; their motions, periods, and their laws,
Give me to scan; through the disclosing deep
Light my blind way; the mineral strata there;
Thrust, blooming, thence the vegetable world;
O'er that the rising system, more complex,
Of animals; and, higher still, the mind,
The varied scene of quick-compounded thought,
And where the mixing passions endless shift—
These ever open to my ravish'd eye;
A search, the flight of time can ne'er exhaust!
But if to that unequal—if the blood,
In sluggish streams about my heart, forbid
That best ambition—under closing shades,
Inglorious, lay me by the lowly brook,
And whisper to my dreams. From thee begin,
Dwell all on thee, with thee conclude my song;
And let me never, never stray from thee!

Winter.

THE ARGUMENT.

The subject proposed. Address to the Earl of Wilmington. First approach of Winter. According to the natural course of the season, various storms described. Rain. Wind. Snow. The driving of the snows: a man perishing among them; whence reflections on the wants and miseries of human life. The wolves descending from the Alps and Apennines. A winter evening described as spent by philosophers; by the country people; in the city. Frost. A view of Winter within the polar circle. A thaw. The whole concluding with moral reflections on a future state.

WINTER.

See, Winter comes, to rule the varied year,
Sullen and sad, with all his rising train;
Vapours, and clouds, and storms. Be these my theme;
These, that exalt the soul to solemn thought,
And heavenly musing. Welcome, kindred glooms!
Congenial horrors, hail! with frequent foot,
Pleas'd have I, in my cheerful morn of life,
When nurs'd by careless solitude I liv'd,
And sung of Nature with unceasing joy,
Pleas'd have I wander'd through your rough domain;
Trod the pure virgin-snows, myself as pure;
Heard the winds roar, and the big torrent burst;
Or seen the deep fermenting tempest brew'd
In the grim evening-sky. Thus pass'd the time;

Till through the lucid chambers of the south
Look'd out the joyous Spring—look'd out and smil'd.
To thee, the patron of this *first* essay,
The muse, O Wilmington! renews her song.
Since has she rounded the revolving year:
Skimm'd the gay Spring; on eagle-pinions borne,
Attempted through the summer blaze to rise;
Then swept o'er Autumn with the shadowy gale;
And now among the wintry clouds again,
Roll'd in the doubling storm, she tries to soar;
To swell her note with all the rushing winds;
To suit her sounding cadence to the flood;
As is her theme, her numbers wildly great:
Thrice-happy! could she fill thy judging ear,
With bold description, and with manly thought.
Nor art thou skill'd in awful schemes alone,
And how to make a mighty people thrive:
But equal goodness, sound integrity,
A firm, unshaken, uncorrupted soul
Amid a sliding age, and burning strong,
Not vainly blazing, for thy country's weal—
A steady spirit, regularly free;

These, each exalting each, the statesman light
Into the patriot; these, the public hope
And eye to thee converting, bid the muse
Record what envy dares not flattery call.

Now when the cheerless empire of the sky
To Capricorn the Centaur-Archer yields,
And fierce Aquarius stains the inverted year—
Hung o'er the farthest verge of heaven, the sun
Scarce spreads o'er ether the dejected day.
Faint are his gleams, and ineffectual shoot
His struggling rays, in horizontal lines,
Through the thick air; as cloth'd in cloudy storm
Weak, wan, and broad, he skirts the southern sky;
And soon descending, to the long dark night,
Wide-shading all, the prostrate world resigns.
Nor is the night unwish'd; while vital heat,
Light, life, and joy, the dubious day forsake.
Meantime, in sable cincture, shadows vast,
Deep-ting'd and damp, and congregated clouds,
And all the vapoury turbulence of heaven
Involve the face of things. Thus Winter falls,
A heavy gloom oppressive o'er the world,

Through nature shedding influence malign,
And rouses up the seeds of dark disease.
The soul of man dies in him, loathing life,
And black with more than melancholy views.
The cattle droop; and o'er the furrow'd land,
Fresh from the plough, the dun discolour'd flocks,
Untended spreading, crop the wholesome root.
Along the woods, along the moorish fens,
Sighs the sad genius of the coming storm;
And up among the loose disjointed cliffs,
And fractur'd mountains wild, the brawling brook
And cave, presageful, send a hollow moan,
Resounding long in listening fancy's ear.

Then comes the father of the tempest forth,
Wrapt in black glooms. First, joyless rains obscure
Drive through the mingling skies with vapour foul,
Dash on the mountain's brow, and shake the woods
That grumbling wave below. The unsightly plain
Lies a brown deluge; as the low-bent clouds
Pour flood on flood, yet unexhausted still
Combine, and deepening into night shut up
The day's fair face. The wanderers of heaven,

Each to his home, retire; save those that love
To take their pastime in the troubled air,
Or skimming flutter round the dimply pool.
The cattle from the untasted fields return,
And ask, with meaning low, their wonted stalls,
Or ruminate in the contiguous shade.
Thither the household feathery people crowd—
The crested cock, with all his female train,
Pensive and dripping; while the cottage-hind
Hangs o'er the enlivening blaze, and taleful there
Recounts his simple frolic: much he talks,
And much he laughs, nor recks the storm that blows
Without, and rattles on his humble roof.

Wide o'er the brim, with many a torrent swell'd,
And the mix'd ruin of its banks o'erspread,
At last the rous'd-up river pours along:
Resistless, roaring, dreadful, down it comes,
From the rude mountain, and the mossy wild,
Tumbling through rocks abrupt, and sounding far;
Then o'er the sanded valley floating spreads,
Calm, sluggish, silent; till again, constrain'd
Between two meeting hills, it bursts a way,

Where rocks and woods o'erhang the turbid stream—
There gathering triple force, rapid and deep,
It boils, and wheels, and foams, and thunders through.

Nature! great parent! whose unceasing hand
Rolls round the Seasons of the changeful year,
How mighty, how majestic, are thy works!
With what a pleasing dread they swell the soul!
That sees astonish'd, and astonish'd sings!
Ye too, ye winds! that now begin to blow,
With boisterous sweep, I raise my voice to you.
Where are your stores, ye powerful beings! say,
Where your aërial magazines reserv'd,
To swell the brooding terrors of the storm?
In what far-distant region of the sky,
Hush'd in deep silence, sleep you when 'tis calm?

When from the pallid sky the sun descends,
With many a spot, that o'er his glaring orb
Uncertain wanders, stain'd—red fiery streaks
Begin to flush around. The reeling clouds
Stagger with dizzy poise, as doubting yet
Which master to obey; while rising slow,
Blank, in the leaden-colour'd east, the moon

Wears a wan circle round her blunted horns.
Seen through the turbid, fluctuating air,
The stars obtuse emit a shivering ray;
Or frequent seem to shoot athwart the gloom,
And long behind them trail the whitening blaze.
Snatch'd in short eddies, plays the wither'd leaf;
And on the flood the dancing feather floats.
With broaden'd nostrils to the sky upturn'd,
The conscious heifer snuffs the stormy gale.
Even as the matron, at her nightly task,
With pensive labour draws the flaxen thread,
The wasted taper and the crackling flame
Foretell the blast. But chief the plumy race,
The tenants of the sky, its changes speak.
Retiring from the downs, where all day long
They pick'd their scanty fare, a blackening train
Of clamorous rooks thick-urge their weary flight,
And seek the closing shelter of the grove.
Assiduous, in his bower, the wailing owl
Plies his sad song. The cormorant on high
Wheels from the deep, and screams along the land.
Loud shrieks the soaring hern; and with wild wing

The circling sea-fowl cleave the flaky clouds.
Ocean, unequal press'd, with broken tide
And blind commotion heaves; while from the shore,
Eat into caverns by the restless wave,
And forest-rustling mountain, comes a voice,
That solemn-sounding bids the world prepare.
Then issues forth the storm with sudden burst,
And hurls the whole precipitated air
Down in a torrent. On the passive main
Descends the ethereal force, and with strong gust
Turns from its bottom the discolour'd deep.
Through the black night that sits immense around,
Lash'd into foam, the fierce conflicting brine
Seems o'er a thousand raging waves to burn.
Meantime the mountain-billows, to the clouds
In dreadful tumult swell'd, surge above surge,
Burst into chaos with tremendous roar,
And anchor'd navies from their stations drive,
Wild as the winds across the howling waste
Of mighty waters: now the inflated wave
Straining they scale, and now impetuous shoot
Into the secret chambers of the deep,

The wintry Baltic thundering o'er their head.
Emerging thence again, before the breath
Of full-exerted heaven they wing their course,
And dart on distant coasts; if some sharp rock
Or shoal insidious, break not their career,
And in loose fragments fling them floating round.

Nor less at hand the loosen'd tempest reigns.
The mountain thunders; and its sturdy sons
Stoop to the bottom of the rocks they shade.
Lone on the midnight steep, and all aghast,
The dark wayfaring stranger breathless toils,
And, often falling, climbs against the blast.
Low waves the rooted forest, vex'd, and sheds
What of its tarnish'd honours yet remain;
Dash'd down, and scatter'd, by the tearing wind's
Assiduous fury, its gigantic limbs.
Thus struggling through the dissipated grove,
The whirling tempest raves along the plain;
And on the cottage thatch'd, or lordly roof,
Keen-fastening, shakes them to the solid base.
Sleep frighted flies; and round the rocking dome,
For entrance eager, howls the savage blast.

Then too, they say, through all the burden'd air,
Long groans are heard, shrill sounds, and distant sighs,
That, utter'd by the demon of the night,
Warn the devoted wretch of woe and death.

Huge uproar lords it wide. The clouds commix'd
With stars swift-gliding, sweep along the sky.
All nature reels: till nature's King, who oft
Amid tempestuous darkness dwells alone,
And on the wings of the careering wind
Walks dreadfully serene, commands a calm;
Then straight air, sea, and earth, are hush'd at once.

As yet 'tis midnight deep. The weary clouds,
Slow-meeting, mingle into solid gloom.
Now, while the drowsy world lies lost in sleep,
Let me associate with the serious night,
And contemplation her sedate compeer;
Let me shake off the intrusive cares of day,
And lay the meddling senses all aside.

Where now, ye lying vanities of life!
Ye ever-tempting, ever-cheating train!
Where are you now? and what is your amount?
Vexation, disappointment, and remorse.

Sad, sickening thought! and yet deluded man,
A scene of crude disjointed visions past,
And broken slumbers, rises still resolv'd,
With new flush'd hopes, to run the giddy round.

Father of light and life! thou Good Supreme!
Oh teach me what is good! teach me Thyself!
Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,
From every low pursuit; and feed my soul
With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure—
Sacred, substantial, never fading-bliss!

The keener tempests come; and fuming dun
From all the livid east, or piercing north,
Thick clouds ascend—in whose capacious womb
A vapoury deluge lies, to snow congeal'd.
Heavy they roll their fleecy world along;
And the sky saddens with the gather'd storm.
Through the hush'd air the whitening shower descends,
At first thin-wavering; till at last the flakes
Fall broad, and wide, and fast, dimming the day
With a continual flow. The cherish'd fields
Put on their winter robe of purest white.
'Tis brightness all; save where the new snow melts

Along the mazy current. Low, the woods
Bow their hoar head; and, ere the languid sun
Faint from the west emits his evening ray,
Earth's universal face, deep-hid and chill,
Is one wild dazzling waste, that buries wide
The works of man. Drooping, the labourer-ox
Stands cover'd o'er with snow, and then demands
The fruit of all his toil. The fowls of heaven,
Tam'd by the cruel season, crowd around
The winnowing store, and claim the little boon
Which Providence assigns them. One alone,
The redbreast, sacred to the household-gods,
Wisely regardful of the embroiling sky,
In joyless fields and thorny thickets leaves
His shivering mates, and pays to trusted man
His annual visit. Half-afraid, he first
Against the window beats; then, brisk, alights
On the warm hearth; then, hopping o'er the floor,
Eyes all his smiling family askance,
And pecks, and starts, and wonders where he is—
Till, more familiar grown, the table-crumbs
Attract his slender feet. The foodless wilds

Pour forth their brown inhabitants. The hare,
Though timorous of heart, and hard beset
By death in various forms, dark snares, and dogs,
And more unpitying men, the garden seeks,
Urg'd on by fearless want. The bleating kind
Eye the bleak heaven, and next the glistening earth,
With looks of dumb despair; then, sad-dispers'd,
Dig for the wither'd herb through heaps of snow.

Now, shepherds, to your helpless charge be kind:
Baffle the raging year, and fill their pens
With food at will; lodge them below the storm,
And watch them strict: for from the bellowing east,
In his dire season, oft the whirlwind's wing
Sweeps up the burden of whole wintry plains
In one wide waft, and o'er the hapless flocks,
Hid in the hollow of two neighbouring hills,
The billowy tempest whelms; till, upward urg'd,
The valley to a shining mountain swells,
Tipp'd with a wreath high-curling in the sky.

As thus the snows arise, and foul and fierce
All Winter drives along the darken'd air,
In his own loose-revolving fields the swain

Disaster'd stands; sees other hills ascend,
Of unknown joyless brow; and other scenes,
Of horrid prospect, shag the trackless plain;
Nor finds the river, nor the forest, hid
Beneath the formless wild; but wanders on
From hill to dale, still more and more astray—
Impatient flouncing through the drifted heaps,
Stung with the thoughts of home: the thoughts of home
Rush on his nerves, and call their vigour forth
In many a vain attempt. How sinks his soul!
What black despair, what horror fills his heart!
When for the dusky spot which fancy feign'd
His tufted cottage, rising through the snow,
He meets the roughness of the middle waste,
Far from the track, and blest abode of man;
While round him night resistless closes fast,
And every tempest, howling o'er his head,
Renders the savage wilderness more wild.
Then throng the busy shapes into his mind,
Of cover'd pits, unfathomably deep,
A dire descent! beyond the power of frost;
Of faithless bogs; of precipices huge,

Smooth'd up with snow; and, what is land unknown,
What water, of the still unfrozen spring,
In the loose marsh or solitary lake,
Where the fresh fountain from the bottom boils.
These check his fearful steps; and down he sinks
Beneath the shelter of the shapeless drift,
Thinking o'er all the bitterness of death,
Mix'd with the tender anguish nature shoots
Through the wrung bosom of the dying man—
His wife, his children, and his friends, unseen.
In vain for him the officious wife prepares
The fire fair-blazing, and the vestment warm;
In vain his little children, peeping out
Into the mingling storm, demand their sire,
With tears of artless innocence. Alas!
Nor wife, nor children, more shall he behold,
Nor friends, nor sacred home. On every nerve
The deadly Winter seizes; shuts up sense;
And, o'er his inmost vitals creeping cold,
Lays him along the snow a stiffen'd corse—
Stretch'd out, and bleaching in the northern blast.

Ah! little think the gay licentious proud,

Whom pleasure, power, and affluence, surround;
They, who their thoughtless hours in giddy mirth,
And wanton, often cruel, riot waste;
Ah! little think they, while they dance along,
How many feel this very moment death,
And all the sad variety of pain.
How many sink in the devouring flood,
Or more devouring flame. How many bleed,
By shameful variance betwixt man and man.
How many pine in want, and dungeon-glooms;
Shut from the common air, and common use
Of their own limbs. How many drink the cup
Of baleful grief, or eat the bitter bread
Of misery. Sore pierc'd by wintry winds,
How many shrink into the sordid hut
Of cheerless poverty. How many shake
With all the fiercer tortures of the mind,
Unbounded passion, madness, guilt, remorse;
Whence tumbled headlong from the height of life,
They furnish matter for the tragic muse.
Even in the vale, where wisdom loves to dwell,
With friendship, peace, and contemplation join'd,

How many, rack'd with honest passions, droop
In deep retir'd distress. How many stand
Around the death-bed of their dearest friends,
And point the parting anguish. Thought fond man
Of these, and all the thousand nameless ills,
That one incessant struggle render life,
One scene of toil, of suffering, and of fate,
Vice in his high career would stand appall'd,
And heedless rambling impulse learn to think;
The conscious heart of charity would warm,
And her wide wish benevolence dilate;
The social tear would rise, the social sigh;
And into clear perfection, gradual bliss,
Refining still, the social passions work.

And here can I forget the generous band,[1]
Who, touch'd with human woe, redressive search'd
Into the horrors of the gloomy jail?
Unpitied, and unheard, where misery moans;
Where sickness pines; where thirst and hunger burn,
And poor misfortune feels the lash of vice.
While in the land of liberty, the land
Whose every street and public meeting glow

With open freedom, little tyrants rag'd:
Snatch'd the lean morsel from the starving mouth;
Tore from cold wintry limbs the tatter'd weed;
Even robb'd them of the last of comforts, sleep;
The free-born Briton to the dungeon chain'd,
Or, as the lust of cruelty prevail'd,
At pleasure mark'd him with inglorious stripes;
And crush'd out lives, by secret barbarous ways,
That for their country would have toil'd, or bled.
Oh great design! if executed well,
With patient care, and wisdom-temper'd zeal.
Ye sons of mercy! yet resume the search;
Drag forth the legal monsters into light,
Wrench from their hands oppression's iron rod,
And bid the cruel feel the pains they give.
Much still untouch'd remains; in this rank age,
Much is the patriot's weeding hand requir'd.
The toils of law, (what dark insidious men
Have cumbrous added to perplex the truth,
And lengthen simple justice into trade)
How glorious were the day that saw these broke,
And every man within the reach of right!

By wintry famine rous'd, from all the tract
Of horrid mountains which the shining Alps,
And wavy Apennines, and Pyrénées,
Branch out stupendous into distant lands—
Cruel as death, and hungry as the grave!
Burning for blood! bony, and gaunt, and grim!
Assembling wolves in raging troops descend;
And, pouring o'er the country, bear along,
Keen as the north-wind sweeps the glossy snow.
All is their prize. They fasten on the steed,
Press him to earth, and pierce his mighty heart.
Nor can the bull his awful front defend,
Or shake the murdering savages away.
Rapacious, at the mother's throat they fly,
And tear the screaming infant from her breast.
The godlike face of man avails him nought.
Even beauty, force divine! at whose bright glance
The generous lion stands in soften'd gaze,
Here bleeds, a hapless undistinguish'd prey.
But if, appris'd of the severe attack,
The country be shut up—lur'd by the scent,
On church-yards drear (inhuman to relate!)

The disappointed prowlers fall, and dig
The shrouded body from the grave; o'er which,
Mix'd with foul shades, and frighted ghosts, they howl.
Among those hilly regions, where embrac'd
In peaceful vales the happy Grisons dwell,
Oft, rushing sudden from the loaded cliffs,
Mountains of snow their gathering terrors roll.
From steep to steep, loud-thundering, down they come,
A wintry waste in dire commotion all;
And herds, and flocks, and travellers, and swains,
And sometimes whole brigades of marching troops,
Or hamlets sleeping in the dead of night,
Are deep beneath the smothering ruin whelm'd.
Now, all amid the rigours of the year,
In the wild depth of Winter, while without
The ceaseless winds blow ice, be my retreat,
Between the groaning forest and the shore,
Beat by the boundless multitude of waves,
A rural, shelter'd, solitary scene;
Where ruddy fire and beaming tapers join
To cheer the gloom. There studious let me sit
And hold high converse with the mighty dead;

Sages of ancient time, as gods rever'd,
As gods beneficent, who bless'd mankind
With arts and arms, and humaniz'd a world.
Rous'd at the inspiring thought, I throw aside
The longliv'd volume; and, deep-musing, hail
The sacred shades, that slowly rising pass
Before my wondering eyes. First Socrates,
Who, firmly good in a corrupted state,
Against the rage of tyrants single stood,
Invincible! calm reason's holy law,
That voice of God within the attentive mind,
Obeying, fearless, or in life or death:
Great moral teacher! wisest of mankind!
Solon the next, who built his commonweal
On equity's wide base; by tender laws
A lively people curbing, yet undamp'd
Preserving still that quick peculiar fire,
Whence in the laurell'd field of finer arts,
And of bold freedom, they unequall'd shone—
The pride of smiling Greece, and human-kind.
Lycurgus then, who bow'd beneath the force
Of strictest discipline, severely wise,

All human passions. Following him, I see,
As at Thermopylæ he glorious fell,
The firm devoted chief,[2] who prov'd by deeds
The hardest lesson which the other taught.
Then Aristides lifts his honest front;
Spotless of heart, to whom the unflattering voice
Of freedom gave the noblest name of Just;
In pure majestic poverty rever'd;
Who, even his glory to his country's weal
Submitting, swell'd a haughty rival's[3] fame.
Rear'd by his care, of softer ray, appears
Cimon sweet-soul'd; whose genius, rising strong,
Shook off the load of young debauch; abroad
The scourge of Persian pride, at home the friend
Of every worth and every splendid art—
Modest, and simple, in the pomp of wealth.
Then the last worthies of declining Greece,
Late-call'd to glory, in unequal times,
Pensive, appear. The fair Corinthian boast,
Timoleon, temper'd happy, mild and firm,
Who wept the brother while the tyrant bled.
And, equal to the best, the Theban pair,[4]

Whose virtues, in heroic concord join'd,
Their country rais'd to freedom, empire, fame.
He too, with whom Athenian honour sunk,
And left a mass of sordid lees behind,
Phocion the good; in public life severe,
To virtue still inexorably firm;
But when, beneath his low illustrious roof,
Sweet peace and happy wisdom smooth'd his brow,
Not friendship softer was, nor love more kind.
And he, the last of old Lycurgus' sons,
The generous victim to that vain attempt,
To save a rotten state, Agis, who saw,
Even Sparta's self to servile avarice sunk.
The two Achæan heroes close the train.
Aratus, who a while relum'd the soul
Of fondly lingering liberty in Greece;
And he her darling as her latest hope,
The gallant Philopœmen, who to arms
Turn'd the luxurious pomp he could not cure:
Or, toiling in his farm, a simple swain;
Or, bold and skilful, thundering in the field.
Of rougher front, a mighty people come!

A race of heroes! in those virtuous times
Which knew no stain, save that with partial flame
Their dearest country they too fondly lov'd.
Her better founder first, the light of Rome,
Numa, who soften'd her rapacious sons.
Servius, the king who laid the solid base
On which o'er earth the vast republic spread.
Then the great consuls venerable rise.
The public father[5] who the private quell'd,
As on the dread tribunal sternly sad.
He whom his thankless country could not lose,
Camillus, only vengeful to her foes.
Fabricius, scorner of all-conquering gold;
And Cincinnatus, awful from the plough.
Thy willing victim,[6] Carthage, burst'ng loose
From all that pleading nature could oppose;
From a whole city's tears, by rigid faith
Imperious call'd, and honour's dire command.
Scipio, the gentle chief, humanely brave,
Who soon the race of spotless glory ran;
And, warm in youth, to the poetic shade
With friendship and philosophy retir'd.

Tully, whose powerful eloquence a while
Restrain'd the rapid fate of rushing Rome.
Unconquer'd Cato, virtuous in extreme.
And thou, unhappy Brutus, kind of heart,
Whose steady arm, by awful virtue urg'd,
Lifted the Roman steel against thy friend.
Thousands, besides, the tribute of a verse
Demand; but who can count the stars of heaven?
Who sing their influence on this lower world?

Behold, who yonder comes! in sober state,
Fair, mild, and strong, as is a vernal sun:
'Tis Phœbus' self, or else the Mantuan swain!
Great Homer too appears, of daring wing,
Parent of song! and equal by his side,
The British muse; join'd hand in hand they walk,
Darkling, full up the middle steep to fame.
Nor absent are those shades whose skilful touch
Pathetic drew the impassion'd heart, and charm'd
Transported Athens with the moral *scene;*
Nor those who, tuneful, wak'd the enchanting lyre.

First of your kind! society divine!
Still visit thus my nights, for you reserv'd,

And mount my soaring soul to thoughts like yours.
Silence, thou lonely power! the door be thine;
See on the hallow'd hour that none intrude,
Save a few chosen friends, who sometimes deign
To bless my humble roof, with sense refin'd,
Learning digested well, exalted faith,
Unstudied wit, and humour ever gay.
Or from the muses' hill will Pope descend,
To raise the sacred hour, to bid it smile,
And with the social spirit warm the heart?
For though not sweeter his own Homer sings,
Yet is his life the more endearing song.

Where art thou, Hammond? thou the darling pride,
The friend and lover of the tuneful throng!
Ah! why, dear youth, in all the blooming prime
Of vernal genius, where disclosing fast
Each active worth, each manly virtue lay,
Why wert thou ravish'd from our hope so soon?
What now avails that noble thirst of fame,
Which stung thy fervent breast? that treasur'd store
Of knowledge, early gain'd? that eager zeal
To serve thy country, glowing in the band

Of youthful patriots, who sustain her name?
What now, alas! that life-diffusing charm
Of sprightly wit? that rapture for the muse,
That heart of friendship, and that soul of joy,
Which bade with softest light thy virtues smile?
Ah! only show'd to check our fond pursuits,
And teach our humble hopes that life is vain!

Thus in some deep retirement would I pass
The winter glooms, with friends of pliant soul,
Or blithe, or solemn, as the theme inspir'd:
With them would search, if Nature's boundless frame
Was call'd late-rising from the void of night,
Or sprung eternal from the Eternal Mind
Its life, its laws, its progress, and its end.
Hence larger prospects of the beauteous whole
Would, gradual, open on our opening minds;
And each diffusive harmony unite,
In full perfection, to the astonish'd eye.
Then would we try to scan the moral world;
Which, though to us it seems embroil'd, moves on
In higher order—fitted, and impell'd,
By Wisdom's finest hand, and issuing all

In general good. The sage historic muse
Should next conduct us through the deeps of time:
Show us how empire grew, declin'd, and fell,
In scatter'd states; what makes the nations smile,
Improves their soil, and gives them double suns;
And why they pine beneath the brightest skies,
In nature's richest lap. As thus we talk'd,
Our hearts would burn within us, would inhale
That portion of divinity, that ray
Of purest heaven, which lights the public soul
Of patriots, and of heroes. But if doom'd,
In powerless humble fortune, to repress
These ardent risings of the kindling soul—
Then, even superior to ambition, we
Would learn the private virtues; how to glide
Through shades and plains, along the smoothest stream
Of rural life; or snatch'd away by hope,
Through the dim spaces of futurity,
With earnest eye anticipate those scenes
Of happiness and wonder—where the mind,
In endless growth and infinite ascent,
Rises from state to state, and world to world.

But when with these the serious thought is foil'd,
We, shifting for relief, would play the shapes
Of frolic fancy; and incessant form
Those rapid pictures, that assembled train
Of fleet ideas, never join'd before,
Whence lively wit excites to gay surprise—
Or folly-painting humour, grave himself,
Calls laughter forth, deep-shaking every nerve.

Meantime the village rouses up the fire:
While, well-attested and as well believ'd,
Heard solemn, goes the goblin-story round,
Till superstitious horror creeps o'er all.
Or, frequent in the sounding hall, they wake
The rural gambol. Rustic mirth goes round:
The simple joke that takes the shepherd's heart,
Easily pleas'd; the long loud laugh, sincere;
The kiss, snatch'd hasty from the sidelong maid,
On purpose guardless, or pretending sleep;
The leap, the slap, the haul; and, shook to notes
Of native music, the respondent dance.
Thus jocund fleets with them the winter night.

The city swarms intense. The public haunt,

Full of each theme, and warm with mix'd discourse,
Hums indistinct. The sons of riot flow
Down the loose stream of false enchanted joy,
To swift destruction. On the rankled soul
The gaming fury falls; and in one gulf
Of total ruin, honour, virtue, peace,
Friends, families, and fortune, headlong sink.
Up springs the dance along the lighted dome,
Mix'd, and evolv'd, a thousand sprightly ways.
The glittering court effuses every pomp;
The circle deepens; beam'd from gaudy robes,
Tapers, and sparkling gems, and radiant eyes,
A soft effulgence o'er the palace waves:
While, a gay insect in *his* summer shine,
The fop, light-fluttering, spreads his mealy wings.

Dread o'er the scene, the ghost of Hamlet stalks;
Othello rages; poor Monimia mourns;
And Belvidera pours her soul in love.
Terror alarms the breast; the comely tear
Steals o'er the cheek: or else the comic muse
Holds to the world a picture of itself,
And raises sly the fair impartial laugh.

Sometimes she lifts her strain, and paints the scenes
Of beauteous life; whate'er can deck mankind,
Or charm the heart, in generous Bevil[r] show'd.
O thou whose wisdom, solid yet refin'd,
Whose patriot virtues, and consummate skill
To touch the finer springs that move the world,
Join'd to whate'er the graces can bestow,
And all Apollo's animating fire,
Give thee, with pleasing dignity, to shine
At once the guardian, ornament, and joy,
Of polish'd life—permit the rural muse,
O Chesterfield, to grace with thee her song!
Ere to the shades again she humbly flies,
Indulge her fond ambition, in thy train,
(For every muse has in thy train a place)
To mark thy various full-accomplish'd mind:
To mark that spirit, which, with British scorn,
Rejects the allurements of corrupted power;
That elegant politeness, which excels,
Even in the judgment of presumptuous France,
The boasted manners of her shining court;
That wit, the vivid energy of sense.

The truth of nature, which, with Attic point,
And kind well-temper'd satire, smoothly keen,
Steals through the soul, and without pain corrects.
Or, rising thence with yet a brighter flame,
Oh let me hail thee on some glorious day,
When to the listening senate, ardent, crowd
Britannia's sons to hear her pleaded cause.
Then drest by thee, more amiable fair,
Truth the soft robe of mild persuasion wears:
Thou to assenting reason giv'st again
Her own enlighten'd thoughts; call'd from the heart,
The obedient passions on thy voice attend;
And even reluctant party feels a while
Thy gracious power—as through the varied maze
Of eloquence, now smooth, now quick, now strong,
Profound and clear, you roll the copious flood.

To thy lov'd haunt return, my happy muse:
For now, behold, the joyous winter-days,
Frosty, succeed; and through the blue serene,
For sight too fine, the ethereal nitre flies—
Killing infectious damps, and the spent air
Storing afresh with elemental life.

Close crowds the shining atmosphere; and binds
Our strengthen'd bodies in its cold embrace,
Constringent; feeds, and animates our blood;
Refines our spirits, through the new-strung nerves,
In swifter sallies darting to the brain—
Where sits the soul, intense, collected, cool,
Bright as the skies, and as the season keen.
All nature feels the renovating force
Of Winter, only to the thoughtless eye
In ruin seen. The frost-concocted glebe
Draws in abundant vegetable soul,
And gathers vigour for the coming year.
A stronger glow sits on the lively cheek
Of ruddy fire: and luculent along
The purer rivers flow; their sullen deeps,
Transparent, open to the shepherd's gaze,
And murmur hoarser at the fixing frost.

What art thou, frost? and whence are thy keen stores
Deriv'd, thou secret all-invading power,
Whom even the illusive fluid cannot fly?
Is not thy potent energy, unseen,
Myriads of little salts, or hook'd, or shap'd

Like double wedges, and diffus'd immense
Through water, earth, and ether? Hence at eve,
Steam'd eager from the red horizon round,
With the fierce rage of Winter deep suffus'd,
An icy gale, oft shifting, o'er the pool
Breathes a blue film, and in its mid-career
Arrests the bickering stream. The loosen'd ice,
Let down the flood, and half-dissolv'd by day,
Rustles no more; but to the sedgy bank
Fast grows, or gathers round the pointed stone—
A crystal pavement, by the breath of heaven
Cemented firm; till, seiz'd from shore to shore,
The whole imprison'd river growls below.
Loud rings the frozen earth, and hard reflects
A double noise; while at his evening watch,
The village dog deters the nightly thief;
The heifer lows; the distant water-fall
Swells in the breeze; and, with the hasty tread
Of traveller, the hollow-sounding plain
Shakes from afar. The full ethereal round,
Infinite worlds disclosing to the view,
Shines out intensely keen; and, all one cope

Of starry glitter, glows from pole to pole.
From pole to pole the rigid influence falls,
Through the still night, incessant, heavy, strong,
And seizes nature fast. It freezes on;
Till morn, late-rising o'er the drooping world,
Lifts her pale eye unjoyous. Then appears
The various labour of the silent night:
Prone from the dripping eave, and dumb cascade,
Whose idle torrents only seem to roar,
The pendent icicle; the frost-work fair,
Where transient hues, and fancied figures, rise;
Wide-spouted o'er the hill, the frozen brook,
A livid tract, cold-gleaming on the morn;
The forest bent beneath the plumy wave;
And by the frost refin'd the whiter snow,
Incrusted hard, and sounding to the tread
Of early shepherd, as he pensive seeks
His pining flock, or from the mountain top,
Pleas'd with the slippery surface, swift descends.

On blithesome frolics bent, the youthful swains,
While every work of man is laid at rest,
Fond o'er the river crowd, in various sport

And revelry dissolv'd; where mixing glad,
Happiest of all the train! the raptur'd boy
Lashes the whirling top. Or, where the Rhine
Branch'd out in many a long canal extends,
From every province swarming, void of care,
Batavia rushes forth; and as they sweep,
On sounding skates, a thousand different ways,
In circling poise, swift as the winds, along,
The then gay land is madden'd all to joy.
Nor less the northern courts, wide o'er the snow,
Pour a new pomp. Eager, on rapid sleds,
Their vigorous youth in bold contention wheel
The long-resounding course. Meantime, to raise
The manly strife, with highly blooming charms,
Flush'd by the season, Scandinavia's dames,
Or Russia's buxom daughters, glow around.

Pure, quick, and sportful, is the wholesome day;
But soon elaps'd. The horizontal sun,
Broad o'er the south, hangs at his utmost noon;
And, ineffectual, strikes the gelid cliff.
His azure gloss the mountain still maintains,
Nor feels the feeble touch. Perhaps the vale

Relents a while to the reflected ray;
Or from the forest falls the cluster'd snow,
Myriads of gems, that in the waving gleam
Gay-twinkle as they scatter. Thick around
Thunders the sport of those who with the gun,
And dog impatient bounding at the shot,
Worse than the season, desolate the fields;
And, adding to the ruins of the year,
Distress the footed or the feather'd game.

But what is this? Our infant Winter sinks,
Divested of his grandeur, should our eye
Astonish'd shoot into the frigid zone;
Where, for relentless months, continual night
Holds o'er the glittering waste her starry reign.

There, through the prison of unbounded wilds,
Barr'd by the hand of Nature from escape,
Wide-roams the Russian exile. Nought around
Strikes his sad eye, but deserts lost in snow;
And heavy-loaded groves; and solid floods,
That stretch, athwart the solitary vast,
Their icy horrors to the frozen main;
And cheerless towns far-distant, never bless'd,

Save when its annual course the caravan
Bends to the golden coast of rich Cathay,
With news of human-kind. Yet there life glows;
Yet cherish'd there, beneath the shining waste,
The furry nations harbour: tipp'd with jet,
Fair ermines, spotless as the snows they press;
Sables, of glossy black; and dark-embrown'd,
Or beauteous freak'd with many a mingled hue,
Thousands besides, the costly pride of courts.
There, warm together press'd, the trooping deer
Sleep on the new-fall'n snows; and, scarce his head
Rais'd o'er the heapy wreath, the branching elk
Lies slumbering sullen in the white abyss.
The ruthless hunter wants nor dogs nor toils,
Nor with the dread of sounding bows he drives
The fearful flying race; with ponderous clubs,
As weak against the mountain-heaps they push
Their beating breast in vain, and piteous bray,
He lays them quivering on the ensanguin'd snows,
And with loud shouts rejoicing bears them home.
There through the piny forest half-absorpt,
Rough tenant of these shades, the shapeless bear,

With dangling ice all horrid, stalks forlorn;
Slow-pac'd, and sourer as the storms increase,
He makes his bed beneath the inclement drift,
And, with stern patience, scorning weak complaint,
Hardens his heart against assailing want.

Wide o'er the spacious regions of the north,
That see Boötes urge his tardy wain,
A boisterous race, by frosty caurus[9] pierc'd,
Who little pleasure know and fear no pain,
Prolific swarm. They once relum'd the flame
Of lost mankind in polish'd slavery sunk,
Drove martial horde on horde,[10] with dreadful sweep
Resistless rushing o'er the enfeebled south,
And gave the vanquish'd world another form.
Not such the sons of Lapland: wisely they
Despise the insensate barbarous trade of war;
They ask no more than simple nature gives;
They love their mountains and enjoy their storms.
No false desires, no pride-created wants,
Disturb the peaceful current of their time;
And, through the restless ever-tortur'd maze
Of pleasure, or ambition, bid it rage.

Their rein-deer form their riches. These their tents,
Their robes, their beds, and all their homely wealth
Supply, their wholesome fare, and cheerful cups.
Obsequious at their call, the docile tribe
Yield to the sled their necks, and whirl them swift
O'er hill and dale, heap'd into one expanse
Of marbled snow, or far as eye can sweep
With a blue crust of ice unbounded glaz'd.
By dancing meteors then, that ceaseless shake
A waving blaze refracted o'er the heavens,
And vivid moons, and stars that keener play
With doubled lustre from the radiant waste,
Even in the depth of polar night, they find
A wondrous day—enough to light the chase,
Or guide their daring steps to Finland fairs.
Wish'd Spring returns; and from the hazy south,
While dim aurora slowly moves before,
The welcome sun, just verging up at first,
By small degrees extends the swelling curve;
Till seen at last for gay rejoicing months,
Still, round and round, his spiral course he winds,
And as he nearly dips his flaming orb

Wheels up again, and re-ascends the sky.
In that glad season, from the lakes and floods,
Where pure Niëmi's[11] fairy mountains rise,
And fring'd with roses Tenglio[12] rolls his stream,
They draw the copious fry. With these, at eve,
They cheerful-loaded to their tents repair;
Where, all day long in useful cares employ'd,
Their kind unblemish'd wives the fire prepare.
Thrice-happy race! by poverty secur'd
From legal plunder and rapacious power:
In whom fell interest never yet has sown
The seeds of vice; whose spotless swains ne'er knew
Injurious deed; nor, blasted by the breath
Of faithless love, their blooming daughters woe.
Still pressing on, beyond Tornéa's lake,
And Hecla flaming through a waste of snow,
And farthest Greenland, to the pole itself,
Where, failing gradual, life at length goes out,
The muse expands her solitary flight;
And, hovering o'er the wild stupendous scene,
Beholds new seas beneath another sky.[13]
Thron'd in his palace of cerulean ice,

Here Winter holds his unrejoicing court;
And through his airy hall the loud misrule
Of driving tempest is for ever heard:
Here the grim tyrant meditates his wrath;
Here arms his winds with all-subduing frost;
Moulds his fierce hail, and treasures up his snows,
With which he now oppresses half the globe.

Thence winding eastward to the Tartar's coast,
She sweeps the howling margin of the main;
Where undissolving, from the first of time,
Snows swell on snows amazing to the sky—
And icy mountains high on mountains pil'd
Seem to the shivering sailor from afar,
Shapeless and white, an atmosphere of clouds.
Projected huge, and horrid, o'er the surge,
Alps frown on alps; or rushing hideous down,
As if old chaos was again return'd,
Wide-rend the deep, and shake the solid pole.
Ocean itself no longer can resist
The binding fury; but, in all its rage
Of tempest taken by the boundless frost,
Is many a fathom to the bottom chain'd,

And bid to roar no more: a bleak expanse,
Shagg'd o'er with wavy rocks, cheerless, and void
Of every life, that from the dreary months
Flies conscious southward. Miserable they!
Who, here entangled in the gathering ice,
Take their last look of the descending sun;
While, full of death, and fierce with tenfold frost,
The long, long night, incumbent o'er their heads,
Falls horrible. Such was the Briton's fate,[14]
As with first prow (what have not Britons dar'd!)
He for the passage sought, attempted since
So much in vain, and seeming to be shut
By jealous Nature with eternal bars.
In these fell regions, in Arzina caught,
And to the stony deep his idle ship
Immediate seal'd, he with his hapless crew,
Each full-exerted at his several task,
Froze into statues; to the cordage glued
The sailor, and the pilot to the helm.

Hard by these shores, where scarce his freezing stream
Rolls the wild Oby, live the last of men;
And, half-enliven'd by the distant sun,

That rears and ripens man, as well as plants,
Here human nature wears its rudest form.
Deep from the piercing season sunk in caves,
Here by dull fires, and with unjoyous cheer,
They waste the tedious gloom. Immers'd in furs,
Doze the gross race. Nor sprightly jest, nor song,
Nor tenderness, they know; nor aught of life,
Beyond the kindred bears that stalk without.
Till morn at length, her roses drooping all,
Sheds a long twilight brightening o'er their fields,
And calls the quiver'd savage to the chase.

What cannot active government perform,
New-moulding man? Wide-stretching from these shores,
A people savage from remotest time,
A huge neglected empire—one vast mind,
By Heaven inspir'd, from Gothic darkness call'd.
Immortal Peter! first of monarchs! He
His stubborn country tam'd, her rocks, her fens,
Her floods, her seas, her ill-submitting sons;
And while the fierce barbarian he subdu'd,
To more exalted soul he rais'd the man.
Ye shades of ancient heroes, ye who toil'd

Through long successive ages to build up
A labouring plan of state, behold at once
The wonder done! behold the matchless prince!
Who left his native throne, where reign'd till then
A mighty shadow of unreal power;
Who greatly spurn'd the slothful pomp of courts;
And roaming every land—in every port
His sceptre laid aside, with glorious hand
Unwearied plying the mechanic tool—
Gather'd the seeds of trade, of useful arts,
Of civil wisdom, and of martial skill.
Charg'd with the stores of Europe, home he goes!
Then cities rise amid the illumin'd waste;
O'er joyless deserts smiles the rural reign;
Far-distant flood to flood is social join'd;
The astonish'd Euxine hears the Baltic roar;
Proud navies ride on seas that never foam'd
With daring keel before; and armies stretch
Each way their dazzling files—repressing here
The frantic Alexander of the north,
And awing there stern Othman's shrinking sons.
Sloth flies the land, and ignorance, and vice,

Of old dishonour proud: it glows around,
Taught by the royal hand that rous'd the whole,
One scene of arts, of arms, of rising trade—
For what his wisdom plann'd, and power enforc'd,
More potent still, his great example show'd.

Muttering, the winds at eve, with blunted point,
Blow hollow-blustering from the south. Subdu'd,
The frost resolves into a trickling thaw.
Spotted the mountains shine; loose sleet descends,
And floods the country round. The rivers swell,
Of bonds impatient. Sudden from the hills,
O'er rocks and woods, in broad brown cataracts,
A thousand snow-fed torrents shoot at once;
And, where they rush, the wide-resounding plain
Is left one slimy waste. Those sullen seas,
That wash the ungenial pole, will rest no more
Beneath the shackles of the mighty north;
But, rousing all their waves, resistless heave—
And, hark! the lengthening roar continuous runs
Athwart the rifted deep: at once it bursts,
And piles a thousand mountains to the clouds.
Ill fares the bark with trembling wretches charg'd,

That, toss'd amid the floating fragments, moors
Beneath the shelter of an icy isle,
While night o'erwhelms the sea, and horror looks
More horrible. Can human force endure
The assembled mischiefs that besiege them round?
Heart-gnawing hunger, fainting weariness,
The roar of winds and waves, the crush of ice,
Now ceasing, now renew'd with louder rage,
And in dire echoes bellowing round the main.
More to embroil the deep, leviathan
And his unwieldy train, in dreadful sport,
Tempest the loosen'd brine; while through the gloom,
Far from the bleak inhospitable shore,
Loading the winds, is heard the hungry howl
Of famish'd monsters, there awaiting wrecks.
Yet Providence, that ever-waking eye,
Looks down with pity on the feeble toil
Of mortals lost to hope, and lights them safe
Through all this dreary labyrinth of fate.

'Tis done!—Dread Winter spreads his latest glooms,
And reigns tremendous o'er the conquer'd year.
How dead the vegetable kingdom lies!

How dumb the tuneful! Horror wide extends
His desolate domain. Behold, fond man!
See here thy pictur'd life; pass some few years—
Thy flowering Spring, thy Summer's ardent strength,
Thy sober Autumn fading into age,
And pale concluding Winter comes at last,
And shuts the scene. Ah! whither now are fled
Those dreams of greatness? those unsolid hopes
Of happiness? those longings after fame?
Those restless cares? those busy bustling days?
Those gay-spent, festive nights? those veering thoughts,
Lost between good and ill, that shar'd thy life?
All now are vanish'd! virtue sole survives,
Immortal, never-failing friend of man,
His guide to happiness on high.—And see!
'Tis come, the glorious morn! the second birth
Of heaven and earth! Awakening nature hears
The new-creating word, and starts to life,
In every heighten'd form, from pain and death
For ever free. The great eternal scheme
Involving all, and in a perfect whole
Uniting, as the prospect wider spreads,

To reason's eye refin'd clears up apace.
Ye vainly wise! ye blind presumptuous! now,
Confounded in the dust, adore that Power
And Wisdom oft arraign'd: see now the cause
Why unassuming worth in secret liv'd,
And died, neglected; why the good man's share
In life was gall and bitterness of soul;
Why the lone widow and her orphans pin'd
In starving solitude—while luxury,
In palaces, lay straining her low thought
To form unreal wants; why heaven-born truth,
And moderation fair, wore the red marks
Of superstition's scourge; why licens'd pain,
That cruel spoiler, that embosom'd foe,
Embitter'd all our bliss. Ye good distress'd!
Ye noble few! who here unbending stand
Beneath life's pressure, yet bear up a while;
And what your bounded view, which only saw
A little part, deem'd evil is no more:
The storms of wintry time will quickly pass,
And one unbounded Spring encircle all.

A Hymn.

A HYMN.

THESE, as they change, Almighty Father, these
Are but the varied God. The rolling year
Is full of thee. Forth in the pleasing Spring
Thy beauty walks, thy tenderness and love.
Wide-flush the fields; the softening air is balm;
Echo the mountains round; the forest smiles;
And every sense, and every heart, is joy.
Then comes thy glory in the summer months,
With light and heat refulgent. Then thy sun
Shoots full perfection through the swelling year;
And oft thy voice in dreadful thunder speaks—
And oft at dawn, deep noon, or falling eve,
By brooks and groves, in hollow-whispering gales.
Thy bounty shines in Autumn unconfin'd,

And spreads a common feast for all that lives.
In Winter, awful thou! with clouds and storms
Around thee thrown, tempest o'er tempest roll'd,
Majestic darkness! on the whirlwind's wing
Riding sublime, thou bidd'st the world adore,
And humblest nature with thy northern blast.

Mysterious round! what skill, what force divine,
Deep-felt, in these appear! a simple train,
Yet so delightful mix'd, with such kind art,
Such beauty and beneficence combin'd;
Shade, unperceiv'd, so softening into shade;
And all so forming an harmonious whole;
That, as they still succeed, they ravish still.
But wandering oft, with brute unconscious gaze,
Man marks not thee, marks not the mighty hand,
That, ever busy, wheels the silent spheres;
Works in the secret deep; shoots, steaming, thence
The fair profusion that o'erspreads the Spring;
Flings from the sun direct the flaming day;
Feeds every creature; hurls the tempest forth;
And, as on earth this grateful change revolves,
With transport touches all the springs of life.

Nature, attend! join every living soul,
Beneath the spacious temple of the sky,
In adoration join; and, ardent, raise
One general song! To him, ye vocal gales,
Breathe soft, whose spirit in your freshness breathes:
Oh talk of him in solitary glooms!
Where, o'er the rock, the scarcely waving pine
Fills the brown shade with a religious awe.
And ye, whose bolder note is heard afar,
Who shake the astonish'd world, lift high to heaven
The impetuous song, and say from whom you rage.
His praise, ye brooks, attune, ye trembling rills;
And let me catch it as I muse along.
Ye headlong torrents, rapid and profound;
Ye softer floods, that lead the humid maze
Along the vale; and thou, majestic main,
A secret world of wonders in thyself,
Sound his stupendous praise—whose greater voice
Or bids you roar, or bids your roarings fall.
Soft-roll your incense, herbs, and fruits, and flowers,
In mingled clouds to him—whose sun exalts,
Whose breath perfumes you, and whose pencil paints.

Ye forests bend, ye harvests wave, to him;
Breathe your still song into the reaper's heart,
As home he goes beneath the joyous moon.
Ye that keep watch in heaven, as earth asleep
Unconscious lies, effuse your mildest beams,
Ye constellations, while your angels strike,
Amid the spangled sky the silver lyre.
Great source of day! best image here below
Of thy Creator, ever pouring wide,
From world to world, the vital ocean round,
On nature write with every beam his praise.
The thunder rolls: be hush'd the prostrate world;
While cloud to cloud returns the solemn hymn.
Bleat out afresh, ye hills; ye mossy rocks,
Retain the sound; the broad responsive low,
Ye valleys, raise; for the Great Shepherd reigns;
And his unsuffering kingdom yet will come.
Ye woodlands all, awake: a boundless song
Burst from the groves; and when the restless day
Expiring, lays the warbling world asleep,
Sweetest of birds! sweet philomela, charm
The listening shades, and teach the night his praise.

Ye chief, for whom the whole creation smiles;
At once the head, the heart, and tongue of all,
Crown the great hymn! in swarming cities vast,
Assembled men, to the deep organ join
The long-resounding voice, oft breaking clear,
At solemn pauses, through the swelling base;
And, as each mingling flame increases each,
In one united ardour rise to heaven.
Or if you rather choose the rural shade,
And find a fane in every sacred grove;
There let the shepherd's flute, the virgin's lay,
The prompting seraph, and the poet's lyre,
Still sing the God of Seasons, as they roll.
For me, when I forget the darling theme,
Whether the blossom blows, the summer ray
Russets the plain, *inspiring* Autumn gleams,
Or Winter rises in the blackening east,
Be my tongue mute—may fancy paint no more.
And, dead to joy, forget my heart to beat!

Should fate command me to the farthest verge
Of the green earth, to distant barbarous climes,
Rivers unknown to song—where first the sun

Gilds Indian mountains, or his setting beam
Flames on the Atlantic isles—'tis nought to me:
Since God is ever present, ever felt,
In the void waste as in the city full;
And where he vital breathes, there must be joy.
When even at last the solemn hour shall come,
And wing my mystic flight to future worlds,
I cheerful will obey; there, with new powers,
Will rising wonders sing: I cannot go
Where Universal Love not smiles around,
Sustaining all yon orbs, and all their sons;
From seeming evil still educing good,
And better thence again, and better still,
In infinite progression.——But I lose
Myself in him, in Light ineffable!
Come then, expressive silence, muse his praise.

Notes.

NOTES.

NOTES TO MEMOIR.

[1] The life of Thomson has been frequently written. The most important narratives are those of Robert Shiels, published in 1753; of Murdoch, published in 1762, and revised in 1768; of Johnson, published in 1781, and revised in 1783; of the Earl of Buchan, published in 1792; of Sir Harris Nicolas, in 1830; and of the Rev. Robert Lundie, of Kelso, in 1830.—Shiels wrote with intelligence, but is very sparing as to dates. Murdoch, the next biographer of the poet, was one of his most intimate friends; and this circumstance, added to the merit of his narrative as a composition, stamps it with a peculiar value. Each of the other biographers enumerated, and especially Sir Harris Nicolas, has produced some additional information, the substance of which I have endeavoured to express in the notes. I have, moreover, had recourse to Spence, to Joseph Warton, and to Boswell; to the *Memoranda of Thomson* by Mr Park; to the *Culloden Papers;* to the recent *Statistical Account of Roxburghshire;* to the letters of the poet which were published by Seward, and by Lundie; to the works of his principal contemporaries, &c.

I have also been indebted to David Laing, Esq., F. S. A. L. and Sc., for various communications; to the Rev. Joseph Thomson, minister of Ednam, and to the Rev. John Richmond, minister of Southdean, for documentary materials; and to William Jerdan, Esq., M. R. S. L., &c., for the favour of some instructive colloquies on his native Teviotdale. —B. C.

[2] Johnson, relying on the testimony of Savage, censures this observation as *not well-timed.* I shall prove, in a future note, the incompetency of his witness.

[3] The village of Ednam is within a short distance of the Tweed. This circumstance explains the epithet "*parent*-stream"—*Autumn*, p. 225, line 17.

[4] Johnson says the 7th of September, but cites no authority. I prefer the date which appears in the text. The poet was *baptized* on the 15th.

[5] The Rev. Thomas Thomson was admitted minister of Ednam in 1692. He was appointed to Southdean, a more extensive parish in the same shire, soon after the poet was born; and preached his farewell sermon at Ednam in November, 1700. The manse of Southdean is near the *sylvan Jed.*

[6] The Rev. Robert Riccaltoun appears to have resided at Hobkirk, about three miles from Southdean. He was minister of Hobkirk from 1725 to 1769. His literary works were published at Edinburgh in 1771, 8vo. 3 vols.

[7] The Rev. William Gusthart died in 1764. His son, Robert Gusthart, M.D., who visited Thomson at Richmond, died at Bath in 1780.

[8] Sir William Bennet of Grubit, Bart. He is celebrated by Allan Ramsay. His seat was in the parish of Eckford, Roxburghshire—where he died in 1729. Ramsay thus adverts to its picturesque attractions:

"Your lovely scenes of *Marlefield* abound
With as much choice as is in Britain found."

Lord Cranston and Sir Gilbert Elliot were also attentive to *our young poet.*

[9] One of these pieces, a poetical epistle to Sir William Bennet, has been preserved. It is chiefly remarkable for its anticipations of poetical celebrity.

[10] He was educated in the grammar-school, which was held in the chapel on the south side of the choir of the venerable Abbey of Jedburgh. The poet had a twofold reason to celebrate the *sylvan Jed.*

[11] His matriculation is not recorded. He was admitted as a student of divinity in 1719, and is presumed to have left the university towards the close of 1724.

[12] The Rev. Thomas Thomson appears to have died in 1720. His tombstone still remains in the churchyard of Southdean, but the inscription is obliterated.

[13] The edition of 1762 has *Hume.* In the revised edition of 1768 it is altered to *Trotter*; and I am enabled to confirm the propriety of this alteration by a certified extract from the session-records of Ednam: "1693, Oct. 6. The said day Mr. Thomas Thomson minister of Ednam, and Beatrix Trotter in the parish of Kelso, gave up their names for proclamation in order to marriage."

[14] This estate, which bore the name of Widehope, is in the parish of Morebattle, Roxburghshire. It is now the property of the Marquess of Tweeddale.

[15] Mrs. Thomson died in 1725. The verses which our poet wrote on this occasion lo honour to his feelings and his poetic taste. I shall give a specimen:

"Ye fabled muses, I your aid disclaim,
Your airy raptures, and your fancied flame:
True genuine woe my throbbing breast inspires,
Love prompts my lays, and filial duty fires;
The soul springs instant at the warm design,
And the heart dictates every flowing line."

[16] The criticism on *Paradise Lost* appeared in 1712. It occupies eighteen numbers of the *Spectator*—which, as Bisset proves, was much read in Scotland.

[17] The *Essay on Criticism* was published in 1711. It was first advertised in the *Spectator*, No. 65. The best homeborn critical-code, and the best models of style, appeared in the same year!

[18] René Le Bossu, author of the *Traité du Poëme Epique*, 1675.—"Son *Traité*," said Voltaire in 1752, "a beaucoup de réputation, mais il ne fera jamais de poëtes." Blair and Laharpe have censured it more pointedly.

[19] The Rev. William Hamilton, minister of Cramond in 1694, was appointed professor of divinity in 1709, and succeeded Wishart as principal in 1732. He died in the following year. Anne, his daughter, was married to John Horsley, F. R. S.

[20] The prescribed exercise was an illustration of the 10th section of the 119th psalm. It was delivered in the divinity-hall on the 27th of October, 1724.

[21] Lady Grisell Baillie, daughter of Sir Patrick Hume afterwards Earl of Marchmont, and wife of George Baillie of Jerviswood, Esq., then member for Berwickshire—both *exalted characters*. Rachel, their second daughter, was married to Charles Lord Binning, in whose family Thomson acted as tutor soon after his arrival in London in March 1725. Lady Grisell Baillie died in 1746.

[22] Duncan Forbes of Culloden, Esq.—He was born near Inverness in 1685, and admitted as an advocate in 1709. In 1722 he obtained a seat in parliament. In 1725 he was appointed lord-advocate, and in 1737 lord-president of the court of sessions. He was a man of eminent ability, activity, and patriotism. Thomson has an encomiastic address to him in *Autumn*, p. 228, line 6, &c. He died at Edinburgh on the 10th of December 1747.

[23] His first introductions were to the Duke of Argyle, the Earl of Burlington, and Sir Robert Walpole, to Dr. Arbuthnot, Mr. Pope, and Mr. Gay.

[24] William Aikman, Esq.—He was born in Scotland in 1682; became a pupil of Medina; and afterwards visited Italy. He painted portraits of the Duke of Argyle, the Countess

of Burlington, Lady Grisell Baillie, and other patrons of Thomson. His own portrait is preserved at Florence. He died in 1731.

[25] The *copy of verses* on Mr. Aikman, as edited in 1750 and 1762, consists of eight lines. As edited by the Earl of Buchan, from the autographic manuscript, it extends to forty-two lines.

[26] Mallet, as Ramsay intimates, left the Grampian Heights to educate *two Grahams*. His pupils were the sons of James first Duke of Montrose; and to this noble patron he dedicated his tragedy of *Eurydice*. An interview with Mallet, at the residence of the duke in Hanover-square, was the earliest object of Thomson on his arrival in London.

[27] Lord William Graham.—He became Earl Graham by the death of an elder brother, in 1731; and Duke of Montrose in 1741. He enjoyed his honours till 1790. His recollections of Mallet and Thomson might have been valuable.

[28] Lord George Graham, member for Stirlingshire, and captain of H. M. S. Nottingham, of sixty guns, died at Bath in 1747.

[29] The character of Mallet has been variously represented. He was "Malloch to his relations, Mallet to his friends, and *Moloch* to his enemies." Shiels, however, declares that his intimacy with Thomson was never "once disturbed by any casual mistake, envy, or jealousy on either side." He died in 1765.

[30] "Winter. A Poem. By James Thomson, A.M. London: printed for J. Millan, 1726." Folio.—Dedicated, in the epistolary form, to Sir Spencer Compton, afterwards Earl of Wilmington. The dedication was written by Mallet. The poem has several lines which now appear in *Autumn*, p. 229, line 3, &c., p. 232, line 4, &c. It was reprinted, with additions; a preface; and commendatory verses by Aaron Hill, *Mira*, and D. Malloch, 1726, 8vo. The first edition was reprinted at Dublin, for William Smith, 1726, 8vo.

[31] This phrase may lead to misconception. Was it *soon read?* Shiels declares that the impression lay as waste paper, and Dr. Warton confirms the statement. The poem was much indebted for its early popularity to two divines. The Rev. Robert Whatley, afterwards prebendary of York, undertook to display its merit to the coffee-house critics; and the Rev. Joseph Spence, afterwards professor of poetry at Oxford, commended it in his *Essay on the Odyssey*.

[32] Perhaps a sarcasm on Pope. Thomson paid his senior this fine compliment:

"For though not sweeter his own Homer sings,
Yet is his life the more endearing song."

Pope, in return, sent him a poetical epistle—but never admitted it into his works! He also glanced at his redundancy of epithets.

[33] Frances, daughter of the Hon. Henry Thynne, and wife of Algernon Seymour, Earl of Hertford—who became Duke of Somerset in 1748. She deserved the rich encomium which appears in *The Seasons—Spring*, line 5, &c. In her letters, says Shenstone, we discern a "perfect rectitude of heart, delicacy of sentiment, and a truly-classic ease and elegance of style." She died in 1754.

[34] Anne Drelincourt, daughter of the Dean of Armagh, was married to Hugh third Viscount Primrose in 1739; and became a widow in 1741. Lady Hervey describes her as a *very sensible amiable* woman. She died in 1775.

[35] Sarah, eldest daughter of Sir Hans Sloane, Bart., and relict of George Stanley, of Paultons, in Hampshire, Esq.—Thomson beautifully apostrophizes Mrs. and Miss Stanley in *Summer*, p. 124, last line. He also wrote an epitaph on Miss Stanley, who died in 1738; and was buried at Southampton. Mrs. Stanley, the *best of parents*, a lover also of astronomy and of poetry, died in 1764.

[36] Thomas Rundle, a native of Milton-Abbots, was educated at Oxford. B. C. L. 1710; D. C. L. 1723. While a student there, he was introduced to Edward, second son of Bishop Talbot. He afterwards became the favourite of the Talbot family, to whom he was indebted for various preferments. On the death of Dr. Sydall, the Lord-Chancellor Talbot recommended him to the see of Gloucester, but the stern opposition of Bishop Gibson prevailed. He was, however, consecrated Bishop of Derry in 1735. Pope, who was charmed with his society, said on that occasion: "He will be an honour to the bishops, and a disgrace to *one* bishop." No person has characterized the genius and writings of Thomson more happily than Rundle. He died at Dublin, before he had reached his sixtieth year, in 1733.

[37] Charles Talbot, Esq., Solicitor-General.—He did not receive the great seal till the 29th of November, 1733. He was forthwith created Baron Talbot.

[38] "Summer. A Poem. By James Thomson. London: printed for J. Millan, 1727." 8vo.—Dedicated, in the epistolary form, to Mr. Dodington, afterwards Lord Melcombe. The poem was reprinted, 1728? 8vo.

[39] "Spring. A Poem. By Mr. Thomson. London, printed: and sold by A. Millar, 1728." 8vo.—Dedicated, in the epistolary form, to the Countess of Hertford. The second separate edition is dated 1731. 8vo.

[40] "The Seasons. [With a Poem to the Memory of Sir Isaac Newton.] By Mr. Thomson. London: printed in the year 1730." 4to. Vignette, plate to each *season*, and monument of Newton.—This handsome volume, which contains the first edition of *Autumn*, was published by subscription. The proposals were circulated before the publication of *Spring*. The epistolary dedications are omitted. *Autumn* is inscribed to Arthur Onslow,

Esq.: the other *seasons* to the same persons as in the first editions. The price to subscribers was *one guinea*. Mr. Dodington subscribed for twenty copies; and, in addition to a brilliant list of nobility, we observe the names of Arbuthnot, Pope, Somerville, Spence, Young.

41 "The Tragedy of Sophonisba. Acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane. By his Majesty's Servants. By Mr. Thomson. London: printed for A. Millar, 1730." 8vo.—Dedicated, in the epistolary form, to Queen Caroline. The prologue and epilogue are anonymous contributions. The former was written by Pope and Mallet. This tragedy was first acted on the 28th of February, 1730. Masinissa was personated by Mr. Wilks; Sophonisba, by Mrs. Oldfield.

42 "A Poem sacred to the Memory of Sir Isaac Newton. By James Thomson. London: printed for J. Millan, 1727." Folio.—Dedicated, in the epistolary form, to Sir Robert Walpole. The intended life of Newton, by Mr. Conduitt, is announced in some lines which are omitted in the editions of 1750 and 1762.

43 John Gray, Esq., author of *A Treatise of Gunnery*, was admitted F. R. S. in 1732; and contributed a paper to the *Philosophical Transactions*. In 1765 he was chosen rector of Marischal College, Aberdeen; and by deed, dated in 1768, founded two mathematical bursaries in that university. He died in London, rector of Marischal College, in 1769; and was buried at Petersham, in Surrey.

44 "Britannia. A Poem. Written in the year 1719." [1727.] London, 1729. 8vo. Second edition, 1730. 4to. Third edition, 1730. 8vo.—In the second edition, the deceptive date is omitted; in the third, it re-appears.

45 Charles Richard Talbot, Esq.—He died before his father was created a peer. Our learned mathematician is somewhat inattentive to synchronism.

46 Thomson had acquired fame by *The Seasons;* and to travel was now his fondest wish —not for mere recreation, but to collect fresh *materia poetica*. In December, 1730, he was at Paris. He proceeded to Lyons, where he met Spence; and afterwards visited the Fontaine de Vaucluse, of which he promised the Countess of Hertford a poetical description. He was at Rome in November, 1731, and in correspondence with Lord Binning—who died at Naples. Before the expiration of 1731 he was at Ashdown Park in Berkshire. He did not make the tour of Europe: as Lyttelton expresses it, he *travelled to Italy*.

47 "[Liberty. A Poem.] Antient and Modern Italy compared; being the first part of Liberty, a Poem. By Mr. Thomson. London: printed for A. Millar, 1735." 4to.—"Greece: being the second part, etc. 1735.—Rome: being the third part, etc. 1735.—Britain: being the fourth part, etc. 1736.—The Prospect: being the fifth part, etc. 1736."—Dedicated,

in the epistolary form, to the Prince of Wales. The poem seems to have been written in compliance with a suggestion of Mr. Dodington. It is a *vision*, comprised in three thousand three hundred and eighty lines of blank verse; and is the least attractive of the works of Thomson. The *dignity of the subject* is undeniable; but it is not less certain that history, geography, arbitrary power, aristocratic sway, etc., may be more effectively treated in prose than in verse.

48 Mr. Talbot died on the 27th of September, 1733; the Lord-Chancellor, on the 14th of February, 1737. The former was in his twenty-fifth year.

49 "A Poem to the Memory of the Right Honourable the Lord Talbot, late Chancellor of Great Britain. By Mr. Thomson. London; printed for A. Millar, 1737." 4to.—Inscribed "To the Right Honourable the Lord Talbot." The poem is in blank verse. It was published in June, 1737.

50 In illustration of this remark, I shall transcribe the conclusion of an eloquent eulogy on Lord Talbot by another of his learned and judicious contemporaries: "He died in the fifty-second year of his age, and though removed at a time of life when others but begin to shine, he might justly be said *satis et ad vitam et ad gloriam vixisse;* and his death united in one general concern a nation which scarce ever unanimously agreed in any other particular—and notwithstanding the unhappy warmth of our political divisions, each Party endeavoured to outvie the other in paying a due reverence to his memory."—Thomas Birch, M. A. F. R. S.

51 George Lyttelton, Esq., eldest son of Sir Thomas Lyttelton, Bart.—He was appointed a lord of the treasury in 1744, and succeeded to the title and estates of his father in 1751; but was not created a peer till 1757. A memoir of this accomplished and amiable man, with an exposure of the sarcastic narrative of Johnson, is a desideratum. He died at Hagley Park in 1773.—Lyttelton, *the friend*, and his beloved Lucy, are choicely enshrined in *The Seasons*.

53 Immediately? I date his return to England in 1731. His patron could not have made him his secretary of briefs before the 29th of November, 1733.

53 The successor of Lord Talbot was Lord Hardwicke. He was a lover of literature; and might have divested himself, on such an occasion, of the habitual pride with which he has been taxed—but I cannot excuse the poet.

54 This *reverse of fortune* seems rather to have increased his literary activity. I must add to the publications of 1738:

"Areopagitica: a Speech of Mr. John Milton, for the Liberty of Unlicens'd Printing, to the Parliament of England. First published in the year 1644. With a Preface, by another hand. London: printed for A. Millar, 1738." 8vo. This preface, of six pages, was written by Thomson.—*Ms. note of Thomas Hollis, Esq.*

"The Works of Mr. Thomson. In two volumes. London: printed for A. Millar, 1738." 8vo. Vignettes, plate to each *season*, and monument of Newton.—This is the first collective edition of the works of Thomson, with alterations and additions.

[a] "Agamemnon. A Tragedy. Acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, by his Majesty's Servants. By Mr. Thomson. London: printed for A. Millar, 1738." 8vo.—Dedicated, in the epistolary form, to the Princess of Wales. The prologue was contributed by Mallet. Thomson, in return, contributed a prologue to *Mustapha*. This tragedy was first acted on the 6th of April, 1738. Agamemnon was personated by Mr. Quin; Clytemnestra, by Mrs. Porter.

[56] Andrew Millar, Esq., the very eminent publisher. He purchased the copyright of *The Seasons* in 1729, and the parties soon became friends. The important case of Millar v. Taylor, on the property of the poem, occupied more than two years. Mr. Millar died, before it was decided, in 1768.

[57] The quarrel between George II. and the Prince of Wales broke out in 1737. It was not a political quarrel; but arose, says the noble author of *Walpoliana*, "solely out of the interior of the palace." It soon, however, bore a political character; the opposition acquired strength; Sir Robert Walpole resigned in 1742; and the patrons of Thomson obtained office.

[58] Mr. Lyttelton was appointed secretary to the Prince, on the resignation of Mr. James Pelham, the 16th of August, 1737. He neither solicited nor expected the office. Thomson had made himself known to the Prince by the dedication of *Liberty*, towards the close of 1734.

[59] Johnson has preserved a curious anecdote of this interview. The Prince questioned the unfortunate poet as to the state of his affairs. He replied "that they were in a more *poetical* posture than formerly." There was tact in this reply: no one likes a querulous applicant.—The allowance was 100*l.* per annum.

[60] Six years may have elapsed before the intercourse commenced. Thomson received his first invitation to Hagley in July 1743. Lyttelton introduced him to Shenstone, who describes him as a *right friendly bard*, in 1746. He was a frequent visitor at Hagley, and always welcome at the Leasowes.

[61] "Edward and Eleonora. A Tragedy. As it was to have been acted at the Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden. By Mr. Thomson. London: printed for the Author; and sold by A. Millar, 1739." 8vo.—Dedicated, in the epistolary form, to the Princess of Wales The prologue and epilogue are anonomous contributions. "ADVERTISEMENT. The representation of this tragedy, on the stage, was prohibited in the year one thousand seven hundred and thirty-nine."

[62] The act of the 10th of George II., cap. 28.—This act received the royal assent on the 21st of June, 1737. It requires that a copy of every *new* interlude, tragedy, comedy, &c,. should be sent to the lord-chamberlain fourteen days before the acting thereof; and authorizes the lord-chamberlain to prohibit the acting, performing, or representing *any* interlude, tragedy, or comedy, &c.—His majesty, in closing the session, bitterly complained of the *licentiousness of the times*. Perhaps the authority which this act confers might have been more temperately and impartially exercised. *Mustapha*, which is not devoid of political allusions, was allowed to be acted—for Mallet had numerous friends. *Gustavus Vasa* and *Edward and Eleonora* were prohibited. Millar and Dodsley, the two most eminent publishers of the time, advertised in the same month *prohibited plays!*

[63] The anecdote, *as it is related*, wants authenticity. The licenser could not venture to exercise his authority before he read the play. The final remark is very inapposite. *Arminius*, dedicated to the Duke of Cumberland, was *printed for the author*, and advertised *price five shillings!*

[64] "Alfred: a Masque. Represented before their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, at Cliffden, on the first of *August*, 1740. London: printed for A. Millar, 1740." 8vo.—This masque is anonymous, but was advertised as the production of Thomson and Mallet. It contains the undying *Rule Britannia*—which I ascribe, on no slight evidence, to Mallet. The piece was twice acted at Cliefden. Alfred was personated by Mr. Milward; the hermit, by Mr. Quin; Emma, by Mrs. Clive.

[65] This refers to an edition of the works of Thomson published in 1762, and hereafter described. *Alfred* seems to have been acted in commemoration of the accession of the House of Hanover: the princess was born on the 31st *of July*.

[66] Murdoch omits to notice the employments of Thomson after the completion of *Alfred* in 1740; but he was never better employed. He was revising *The Seasons*—on whose origin and progress I shall now state some additional facts.

As early as 1720 he felt the attractions of the theme—witness some lines, an epitome of the mysterious cycle, in his poem *Of a Country Life:*

> "Through every *Season* of the sliding year,
> Unto the ravish'd sight new scenes appear.
> In the sweet *Spring*," &c.

He was eminently fitted to the bold design, but chance may have led him to decide on its execution.—"*Nature*," said he, "*delights me in every form:*" such were his feelings while occupied in writing his *Winter;* and he added, in the confidence of friendship, a "*poem on winter* first put the design into my head." The poem seems to have perished; but the late Dr. Somerville of Jedburgh, who attained his ninetieth year, *had heard part of it recited by the author*—the Rev. Robert Riccaltoun. The above facts chiefly apply to

Winter; we have other evidence on the origin of *The Seasons.* Thomson informed Collins that he *took his first hint and idea of writing his Seasons* from the titles to the four *Pastorals* of Pope. The *Pastorals,* which were published in 1709, are entitled Spring—Summer—Autumn—Winter; and in a preface thereto, published with his *Works* in 1717, the author remarks that "the year has not that variety in it to furnish every *month* with a particular description, as it may every *season.*"

There is a remarkable resemblance between the two writers in *Winter;* and it adds to the testimony of Collins, as reported by Dr. Warton:

"'Tis done, and nature's various charms decay." POPE.

"'Tis done!—Dread Winter has subdu'd the year." THOMSON.

In the first edition of *Winter,* Thomson also sang of *fair Autumn.* In the second edition he earnestly pleaded in favour of descriptive poetry, and thus intimated his entire design: "How gay looks the Spring! how glorious the Summer! how pleasing the Autumn! and how venerable the Winter!" This design was completed, as Murdoch observes, in 1730; but he should have added that a revised edition of the *Seasons* appeared in 1738; another edition, with considerable additions and improvements, in 1744; and another edition, with the final revision of the author, in 1746.

The number of lines contained in the poem, at the above-mentioned epochs, shall now be stated in a tabular form. The italic figures denote the first editions.

A. D.	1726	1727	1728	1730	1738	1744	1746
SPRING			*1082*	1087	1087	1173	1176
SUMMER		*1146*		1206	1206	1796	1805
AUTUMN				*1269*	1269	1375	1373
WINTER	*405*			781	787	1069	1069
HYMN				*121*	121	118	118
Total				4464	4470	5531	5541

It thus appears that Thomson paid no serious attention to the poem in the interval 1730—8. He afterwards undertook to correct it; made *considerable additions;* and inscribed it to the Prince of Wales in 1744. He also re-edited the poem, with further additions, in 1746. The volumes are entitled:

"The Seasons. By James Thomson. London: printed for A. Millar, in the Strand. 1744." Sm. 8vo. pp. 4+242. Vignette, and plate to each *season.*

"The Seasons, By James Thomson. London: printed for A. Millar, in the Strand. 1746." 12mo. pp. 4+236. Vignette, and plate to each *season.*

The edition of 1744 was improved by the suggestion of Pope; and the interleaved volume which received his emendations has become the property of the Rev. John Mitford—

who, with the true feelings of a critic and a poet, values it as the *ruby in the royal crown*. The edition of 1746, as it exhibits the final revision of the author, must ever be considered as the standard impression; except in orthography and punctuation. A circumstance elsewhere recorded by Murdoch, gives it an additional importance. He reminds Mr. Millar that Thomson published his own editions with *much deliberation and care*.

I shall not attempt to enumerate the subsequent editions of *The Seasons*. The most splendid are those printed—at Glasgow, for Andrew Foulis, 1783. Folio.—at Parma, by Bodoni, 1794. 4to.—and at London, by T. Bensley, 1797. Folio.—all defective as to the text. The most popular edition is that of the late Dr. Aikin. It has a preliminary essay on the plan of the poem, remarkable for its judicious criticism and classical terseness of style.

67 "Tancred and Sigismunda. A Tragedy. As it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, by his Majesty's Servants. By James Thomson. London: printed for A. Millar, 1745." 8vo.—Dedicated, in the epistolary form, to the Prince of Wales. This tragedy, much shortened, was first acted on the 18th of March, 1745.

68 "The Castle of Indolence: an Allegorical Poem. Written in imitation of Spenser. By James Thomson. London: printed for A. Millar, 1748." 4to. Second edition, 1748. 8vo. —The *Castle of Indolence* has no dedication. The poem is divided into two cantos, comprising one hundred and fifty-eight stanzas; four of which, afterwards revised, were contributed by Armstrong. It was near fifteen years in hand.—Thomson was an ardent admirer of the *gentle Spenser;* and has left us in this noble specimen of art, the combined result of his earliest inspiration, and his mature taste. It is, as I have elsewhere observed, *one of the most impressive and exquisite pieces within the circle of true poesy*.

69 We have had no account of the minor poems of Thomson.—*The Edinburgh Miscellany*, 1720, sm., 8vo. contains three pieces which are ascribed to him—I believe correctly, viz. 1. *Of a Country Life;* 2. *Upon Happiness;* 3. *Verses on receiving a Flower from his Mistress*. In a volume entitled *Miscellaneous Poems by several Hands*, London, 1729, 12 mo., he is particularly named as a contributor. In this collection, which was edited by Mr. Ralph, the pieces are anonymous; but I observe, 1. *A Paraphrase on the Latter Part of the 6th Chap. of St. Matthew;* 2. *The Incomparable Soporific Doctor;* 3. *The Happy Man;* 4. *Hymn on Solitude*. These poems were undoubtedly written by Thomson; and they were reprinted, perhaps for private circulation, uniformly with *The Seasons*, 1730, 4to. In the *Works* of Thomson, as edited in 1750 and 1762, the minor pieces are fourteen in number; but we miss the *Soporific Doctor* and *The Happy Man*. The most ample collection is contained in the Aldine edition of the *Poetical Works of James Thomson*, 1830, 2 vols.

70 He had resided at Richmond six years or more. His earliest letter from Kew-Lane is dated in November, 1741; and his encomium on *delightful Sheen*, with its *boundless landscape*, appeared in 1744. His attachment to the spot increased, and he wrote thus to Mr.

Paterson only four months before his decease: "You must know that I have enlarged my *rural domain*."

[71] Andrew Mitchell of Thainston, Aberdeenshire, Esq.—He was patronized by the celebrated Duke of Argyle, and had the entire confidence of the Lord-President Forbes. In 1742 the Marquess of Tweeddale made him his under-secretary of state. In 1747 he obtained a seat in Parliament. Thomson wrote to his friend Paterson on that occasion: "Mitchell is in the house for Aberdeenshire, and has spoken modestly well: I hope he will be in something else soon. None deserves better: *true friendship and humanity dwell in his heart*." In 1756 he was appointed Envoy Extraordinary to the King of Prussia; and was an eyewitness of the battle of Prague. In 1765 he was invested with the order of the Bath. He died at Berlin in 1771.

[72] Andrew Reid, Esq.—"A man," says Johnson, "not unacquainted with letters or with life." He wrote on chronology and on logarithms. He also edited, for Lord Lyttelton, the *History of Henry II.*—Murdoch was one of his friends, and addressed to him a paper on parallax. He died after 1768.

[73] John Armstrong, M. D.—the author of *The Art of Preserving Health*. He was a native of Roxburghshire—the son of a minister—educated at Edinburgh—a writer of blank verse—and had just finished a poem on winter when the *Winter* of Thomson appeared! These are curious coincidences. On other points, the *contrast* was not less striking—nevertheless, Armstrong and Thomson were intimate friends. Armstrong survived, in despite of his morbid aversion to life, till 1779.

[74] The interesting letter which follows is preserved in the *Culloden Papers:*

"My dear P. [Patrick] Richmond, in Surrey, Saturday, 27 August.

"Our dear friend Thomson died this morning about four o'clock, after a very short illness. His distemper appeared first in the shape of a tertian; but soon ended in a continued fever. I am here to see the last duties fairly paid. I am almost sunk wt this last stroke. Your's affecty

"*To the Rev. Mr. Murdoch.* A. M." [Andrew Mitchell.]

Dr. Armstrong and Mr. James Robertson attended Thomson in their medical capacities, and as friends. They were with him to the last moment. His constitution, says Armstrong, was *much worn*. No other particulars of importance are recorded.—He was followed to the grave by Mr. Quin, Mr. Mallet, Mr. Robertson, &c., on the evening of the 29th of August:

"Remembrance oft shall haunt the shore
When Thames in summer-wreaths is drest,
And oft suspend the dashing oar
To bid his gentle spirit rest!"

[75] Thomson died intestate, as appears by this official document:

"*Extracted from the Registry of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury.*—October, 1748. James Thompson [sic]. On the twenty fifth day admõn of all and singular the goods chattles and credits of James Thompson late of Richmond in the county of Surry batchelor deceased was granted to the Honble George Lyttelton [sic] Esqr. and Andrew Mitchell Esqr. the lawful attorneys of Mary Craig formerly Thompson (wife of William Craig) the ñral and lawfull sister and next of kin of the said deceased for the use and benefit of the said Mary Craig now residing at Edinburgh being first sworn duly to administer.

CHAS. DYNELEY
JOHN IGGULDEN
W. F. GOSTLING
} Deputy Registers."

Thomson, it appears, died a bachelor. His *uncertain circumstances* forbade him to marry. He had *two* surviving sisters. Jean, the wife of Mr. Robert Thomson, died in 1781; and Mary, above described, died in 1790. His house was well provided with furniture, plate, books, and prints; and his cellar was stored with choice wines and Scotch ale. I can give no account of the *manuscripts*. The house, or rather its site, has been successively the property of George Ross, Esq., who died in 1786; the Honble Mrs. Boscawen, who died in 1805; Lord Falmouth, who sold it forthwith; and the Earl of Shaftesbury.

[76] "Coriolanus. A Tragedy. As it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden. By the late James Thomson. London: printed for A. Millar, 1749." 8vo.—This tragedy, revised by Lyttelton, was first acted on the 13th of January, 1749. Coriolanus was personated by Mr. Quin; Veturia by Mrs. Woffington.

[77] M. le Baron de Barante, whose memoir of Thomson contains much judicious criticism and pleasing reflection, observes of the poetical address composed on this occasion by Lyttelton: "ce sont peut-être les plus beaux vers qu'il ait faits: ils sont remplis du sentiment le plus vrai et le plus touchant."

[78] Mr. Quin, as the personal friend of Thomson, spoke the prologue *in mourning*. In the delivery of the following paragraph, he is said to have produced an extraordinary effect:

"He lov'd his friends—forgive this gushing tear:
Alas! I feel I am *no actor* here—
He lov'd his friends with such a warmth of heart,
So clear of interest, so devoid of art,
Such generous freedom, such unshaken zeal,
No words can speak it—but our tears may tell."

[79] A brass tablet, with an inscription by the Earl of Buchan, was placed over the spot in 1792. Mr. Park superintended its execution.

[80] An obvious allusion to Pope. Dr. Warton, however, observes that the death of Pope "was not lamented by any of his contemporary poets, till Mr. Mason made amends by his *Musæus*"—which was not published till 1747.

[81] The *Ode* is now reprinted from the only authoritative edition, London, R. Manby and H. S. Cox, 1749, Folio. I have been indebted for the use of this rare piece to the friendly communication of the Rev. Alexander Dyce. The dedication was omitted by Langhorne and others.—I must add that Shiels also published a poem to the memory of Thomson. It is entitled *Musidorus*.

[82] He describes himself, in the *Castle of Indolence*, as "more fat than bard beseems." I shall repeat the entire stanza; as it exhibits, says Shiels, a *just image* of Thomson. He wrote only the first line; the remainder being the contribution of a friend—perhaps Lyttelton:

"A bard here dwelt, more fat than bard beseems;
Who void of envy, guile, and lust of gain,
On virtue still, and nature's pleasing themes,
Pour'd forth his unpremeditated strain,
The world forsaking with a calm disdain:
Here laugh'd he careless in his easy seat,
Here quaff'd encircled with the joyous train;
Oft moralizing sage; his ditty sweet
He loathed much to write, ne cared to repeat."

[83] The portrait of Thomson by Aikman, now at Hagley, confirms this opinion. It has been engraved. Another portrait, painted by J. Paton in 1746, has been engraved by S. F. Ravenet. I have an impression with this inedited note: "Mr. Robertson of Richmond Green, who was acquainted with Thomson for more than twenty years, and attended him in his last moments, assured me that this portrait was a *very strong likeness*.—T. Park, 1791."

[84] Johnson relates that Mr. Dodington was once "so much provoked by his odd utterance, that he snatched the paper from his hand, and told him that he did not understand his own verses." Mr. Dodington, however, was one of his earliest and most generous friends. He was created Baron Melcombe in 1761, and died in 1762.

[85] On his *classical* proficiency, we have this testimony of Dr. Warton: Thomson was well acquainted with the Greek tragedies, on which I heard him talk learnedly, when I was once introduced to him by my friend Mr. W. Collins."

[86] Thomson confirms this statement both in prose and in verse. In a letter to Lyttelton he says, "I think that season of the year the most pleasing, and the most *poetical*." He expresses the same sentiment in *Autumn*, and in the *Hymn*.

[87] Mr. Park in his conversation with Mr. Robertson on the habits of Thomson, said—"I hear he kept very late hours?" The reply was—"No, sir—very early. He was always up at sunrise—but then he had never been in bed." We may therefore credit the assertion of Cave, that *noon* was his hour of rising.

[88] The Mr. Gray who is mentioned in a previous paragraph; *there* designated as of Marischal College, Aberdeen—*here*, to the quondam embarrassment of a certain annotator, as of Richmond Hill!

[89] Both Johnson and Boswell had, at one period, an unfavourable opinion of the moral character of Thomson. Boswell, however, recanted; and wrote thus to Johnson in 1778: "He was of a humane and benevolent disposition; not only sent valuable presents to his sisters, but a yearly allowance in money, and was always wishing to have it in his power to do them more good."

I have now to encounter Johnson, and Savage.—Johnson, relying on the statements of Savage, hints that the poet and the man were very dissimilar beings: the former—a great lover, a great swimmer, and rigorously abstinent: the latter—insensible to passion, never in cold water, and extremely luxurious. Now I affirm, as to the first accusation, that Thomson was *desperately in love* with the Amanda whom he celebrates in verse; the second accusation is beneath discussion; but as to the third, I am prepared to admit that he yielded more frequently to the allurements of festive pleasure than might become a true votary of *serene philosophy*. It was one of the prominent vices of the times.

[90] Thomson did not always escape criticism. On the appearance of *Liberty*, Mr. Hawkins Browne published his *Pipe of Tobacco*—the most ingenious specimen of imitative verse anterior to the *Rejected Addresses*. One of the imitations commences thus:

> "O thou, matur'd by *glad Hesperian* suns,
> TOBACCO, fountain pure of *limpid truth*,
> *That looks the very soul*; &c.

The phrases printed in italics are from the commencement of *Liberty*. This was more than the Poet could endure: he replied with extreme asperity!

[91] This observation might have been correct in 1762. I could illustrate it by various extracts of letters—but one may suffice:—"We have lost, my dear F. [Forbes], our old, tryed, amiable, open, and honest-hearted Thomson, whom we never parted from but unwillingly; and never met, but with fresh transport; whom we found ever the same delightful companion, the same faithful depository of our inmost thoughts, and the same sensible sympathising adviser."—Murdoch to John Forbes of Culloden, Esq., 8 Sept. 1748.

[92] Thomson was an occasional visiter at Cliefden-house; but the friendship of the Lord-Chancellor Talbot, of the Lord-President Forbes, and of Lyttelton, more decidedly proves the estimation in which he was held.—I must add to the number of his intimate friends,

in the order of survivorship, Hammond the Poet—ob. 1742; Gilbert West the Poet—ob. 1756; Robert Symmer, Esq., afterwards F. R. S.—ob. 1763; Young the Poet—ob. 1765; John Forbes, Esq., son of the Lord-President—ob. 1772; George Lewis Scott, Esq., F. R. S.—ob. 1780; and George Ross, Esq., the army agent, afterwards M. P.—ob. 1786.—Mr. Robertson, who resided some years at Richmond, and married the sister of Amanda, was the last survivor. He died in 1791.

[93] Mrs. Oldfield was a subscriber to *The Seasons*, 1730—but died in the same year. Mr. Quin was a *sincere friend* to Thomson; and is said to have relieved him in a moment of pecuniary embarrassment.—The names of the actors of the principal parts in his dramatic pieces are given in notes 41, 55, 64, 67, and 76.

[94] The tragic qualifications of Thomson seem to be fairly appreciated by Bishop Rundle. He commends him for "a profusion of worthy sentiments, and high poetry;" but observes that he "wants that neatness and simplicity of diction which is so natural in dialogue."

[95] As the biographer modestly declines the task of characterizing the works of Thomson, I shall call in the assistance of another of his friends—Lord Lyttelton. The extract which follows, though given in the imaginative form of a *dialogue in Elysium*, between Boileau and Pope, is believed to exhibit his own sentiments.

"Boileau. Who is the Poet that arrived soon after you in Elysium, whom I saw Spenser lead in and present to Virgil, as the Author of a poem resembling the *Georgics*? On his head was a garland of the several kinds of flowers that blow in each season, with evergreens intermixed.—Pope. Your description points out *Thomson*. He painted nature exactly, and with great strength of pencil. His imagination was rich, extensive, and sublime: his diction bold and glowing, but sometimes obscure and affected. Nor did he always know when to stop, or what to reject.—Boileau. I should suppose that he wrote tragedies upon the Greek model: for he is often admitted into the grove of Euripides.—Pope. He enjoys that distinction both as a tragedian and as a moralist. For, not only in his plays, but all his other works, there is the purest morality, animated by piety, and rendered more touching by the fine and delicate sentiments of a most tender and benevolent heart."

[96] Herr F. Schlegel admits that Thomson is the prototype of continental descriptive poets. Mme Bontems much extended his fame by her prose translation of 1759. The other translation are enumerated by Ebert and Quérard.

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[a] Note to p. 41.

[*] "*The Seasons. By James Thomson. London: printed for A. Millar in the Strand.* 1746." 12mo.

Dedication. "To His Royal Highness Frederic Prince of Wales, this poem, corrected

and made less unworthy of his protection, is, with the utmost gratitude and veneration, inscribed, by His Royal Highness's most obedient and most devoted servant, JAMES THOMSON."

ADVERTISEMENT. "This poem having been published several years ago, and considerable additions made to it lately, some little anachronisms have thence arisen, which it is hoped the reader will excuse."

NOTES ON THE SEASONS.

BY THE AUTHOR.

SPRING.

NOTE 1. P. 77, line 16.

Such as amazing frowns
On utmost Kilda's shore.

The farthest of the Western Islands of Scotland.

SUMMER.

NOTE 1. P. 124, last line.

And art thou, Stanley, of that sacred band?

A young lady, well known to the author, who died at the age of eighteen, in the year 1738.

NOTE 2. P. 128, line 11.

But kind before him sends,
Issuing from out the portals of the morn,
The general breeze.

Which blows constantly between the tropics from the east, or the collateral points, the north-east and south-east: caused by the pressure of the rarefied air on that before it, according to the diurnal motion of the sun from east to west.

NOTE 3. P. 128, line 15.

That see, each circling year,
Returning suns and double seasons pass.

In all places between the tropics, the sun, as he passes and repasses in his annual motion, is twice a year perpendicular, which produces this effect.

NOTE 4. P. 131, line 14.

Behold! in plaited mail,
Behemoth rears his head.

The hippopotamus, or river-horse.

NOTE 5. P. 132, last 3 lines.

But, if she bids them shine,
Array'd in all the beauteous beams of day,
Yet frugal still, she humbles them in song.

In all the regions of the torrid zone, the birds, though more beautiful in their plumage, are observed to be less melodious than ours.

NOTE 6. P. 136, line 21.

Menam's orient stream, that nightly shines
With insect-lamps.

The river that runs through Siam; on whose banks a vast multitude of those insects called fire-flies make a beautiful appearance in the night.

NOTE 7. P. 137, line 12.

The mighty Orellana.

The river of the Amazons.

NOTE 8. P. 144, lines 2 and 4.

The circling typhon, whirl'd from point to point,
Exhausting all the rage of all the sky,
And dire ecnephias, reign.

Typhon and ecnephias, terms for particular storms or hurricanes, known only between the tropics.

NOTE 9. P. 144, line 5.

Deep in a cloudy speck
Compress'd, the mighty tempest brooding dwells.

Called by sailors the ox-eye, being in appearance at first no bigger.

NOTE 10. P. 144, line 19.

With such mad seas the daring Gama fought.

Vasco da Gama, the first who sailed round Africa, by the Cape of Good Hope, to the East Indies.

NOTE 11. P. 145, line 6.

The Lusitanian prince.

Dom Henry, third son to John the First, King of Portugal. His strong genius to the discovery of new countries was the chief source of all the modern improvements in navigation.

NOTE 12. P. 147, line 10.

From Ethiopia's poisoned woods,
From stifled Cairo's filth, and fetid fields
With locust armies putrefying heap'd,
This great destroyer sprung.

These are the causes supposed to be the first origin of the plague, in Dr. Mead's elegant book on that subject. [A Short Discourse concerning Pestilential Contagion, &c. London, 1720. 8vo.]

NOTE 13. P. 160, line 13.

So stands the statue that enchants the world.

The Venus of [the] Medici.

NOTE 14. P. 163, line 8.

Or ascend,
While radiant Summer opens all its pride,
Thy hill, delightful Sheen?

The old name of Richmond, [*shene*] signifying in Saxon *shining*, or *splendour*

NOTE 15. P. 163, line 11.

The sister-hills that skirt her plain.

Highgate and Hampstead.

NOTE 16. P. 168, line 18.

With him
His friend, the British Cassius, fearless bled.

Algernon Sidney.

NOTE 17. P. 169, line 19.

The generous Ashley thine, the friend of man.

Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury.

AUTUMN.

NOTE 1. P. 221, line 2.

High Olympus pouring many a stream!

The mountain called by that name in the lesser Asia.

NOTE 2. P. 221, line 9.

Cold Rhipæan rocks, which the wild Russ
Believes the stony girdle of the world.

The Muscovites call the Rhipæan mountains Weliki Camenypoys, [*Pojas Semnoi*, says Strahlenberg,] that is, the great stony girdle; because they suppose them to encompass the whole earth.

NOTE 3. P. 221, line 18.

The bending Mountains of the Moon.

A range of mountains in Africa, that surround almost all Monomotapa.

NOTE 4. P. 233, line 2.

That temple where, in future times,
Thou well shalt merit a distinguish'd name.

The Temple of Virtue in Stowe Gardens.

WINTER.

NOTE 1. P. 267, line 15.

The generous band,
Who, touch'd with human woe, redressive search'd
Into the horrors of the gloomy jail?

The jail committee, in the year 1729.

NOTE 2. P. 272, line 3.

I see,
As at Thermopylæ he glorious fell,
The firm devoted chief.

Leonidas.

Note 3. P. 272, line 10.

A haughty rival's fame.

Themistocles.

Note 4. P. 272, last line.

The Theban pair,
Whose virtues, in heroic concord join'd,
Their country rais'd to freedom.

Pelopidas and Epaminondas.

Note 5. P. 274, line 9.

The public father, who the private quell'd.

Marcus Junius Brutus.

Note 6. P. 274, line 15.

Thy willing victim, Carthage, bursting loose
From all that pleading nature could oppose.

Regulus.

Note 7. P. 281, line 3.

Whate'er can deck mankind,
Or charm the heart, in generous Bevil show'd.

A character in the Conscious Lovers, written by Sir Richard Steele.

Note 8. P. 288, line 2.

The golden coast of rich Cathay.

The old name for China.

Note 9. P. 289, line 8.

By frosty caurus pierc'd.

The north-west wind.

Note 10. P. 289, line 12.

They once relumed the flame
Of lost mankind in polish'd slavery sunk,
Drove martial horde on horde.

The wandering Scythian clans.

Note 11. P. 191, line 3.

Where pure Niëmi's fairy mountains rise.

M. de Maupertuis, in his book on The Figure of the Earth, after having described the beautiful lake and mountain of Niemi, in Lapland, says: "From this height we had

occasion several times to see these vapours rise from the lake, which the people of the country call Haltios, and which they deem to be the guardian spirits of the mountains. We had been frighted with stories of bears that haunted this place, but saw none. It seemed rather a place of resort for fairies and genii than for bears." [London, 1738. 8vo. p. 56.]

NOTE 12. P. 291, line 4.

And fring'd with roses Tenglio rolls his stream.

The same author observes: "I was surprised to see, upon the banks of this river (the Tenglio), roses of as lively a red as any that are in our gardens." [P. 56.]

NOTE 13. P. 291, line 21.

Beholds new seas beneath another sky.

The other hemisphere.

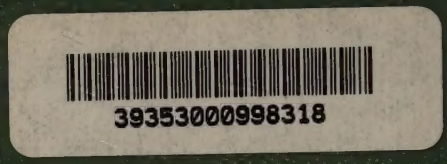
NOTE 14. P. 293, line 9.

Such was the Briton's fate,
As with first prow (what have not Britons dar'd!)
He for the passage sought, attempted since
So much in vain.

Sir Hugh Willoughby, sent by Queen Elizabeth to discover the north-east passage.

THE END

JAN 69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